

MEMOIRS AND STOVOLD HISTORY

RAYMOND STOVOLD

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## INTRO: THE STOVOLD FAMILY IN SURREY

I have searched many old church registers, both of Elstead and Farnham, of baptisms and marriages to trace the family history in Surrey. The name Stovold appears more than any other. I have only dealt with one branch which appears to be a direct male line. The last six generations contain the name Frederick and the dates of birth are fairly authentic. Earlier registers may refer to baptisms or dates of birth, it is not always clear. One Christian name, the same as the father's, made things more difficult.

The family could be of Scandinavian origin. It is thought they may have come over at the time of the Vikings in the Ninth Century and, in fact, before the First War my Great Uncle Percy traced the name back to the time of William the Conqueror. Furthermore, he went on to say VOLD means a Plain (as opposed to Hill or Valley). The STO means in Norwegian, "A Man of VOLD, the plain". The suffix can be seen in names like out present Judge, Carl AARVOLD and during the German occupation of Norway during the 1939-45 war the Prime Minister was a man named NAGYSYARVOLD.

In Lady Boston's "History of Surrey" it was suggested the name was derived from two old English words – "Stod" denoting stud (or possibly "stot" horse) and "falod" an enclosure. This English derivation seems feasible. Either could denote an interest in agriculture.

The style and spelling has altered over the years, put down to illiterate clerks in the early period. Three examples are: 1564 "Elizabeth Stavalle, the wiffe of Hary Stovalle was buried the XIII daye of Julye". 1632 Dec. 23 "Maria Stoffould filia Robert Stoffould bapt." 1634 "John Stovold senior (burial) Febr.5."

The first local record of Stovold, as a personal name, occurs in 1269 as John de Stofolde and again in a document dated 1284 in which Ralph de Stofold appears in connection with land at Bramley. Again in 1356 William de Stofold is mentioned concerning land at Chiddingfold. There can be little doubt that Stovold is essentially a Surrey name. At Cranleigh there is a "Stovold's Hill" and since the 1939-45 War I have granted permission for an Aldershot housing estate to be named "Stovold's Way". Prior to the 1920's the family was farming in a large way and at one time at Polshot and neighbouring farms in Elstead, Broomleaf, Farnham and Lydling, Shackelford. A member of the family unit must have been farming at Aldershot and sold land for part of the railway construction – hence Stovold's Way.

THE STOVOLD FAMILY IN SURREY

Direct Male Line (subject to confirmation) – 1563-1953

<u>HENRY</u> D. 17.5.1577	=	Elizabeth D. 14.7.1564	
<u>EDWARD</u> B. 1.1.1563	=		
<u>HENRY</u> D. 10.4.1609	=	Mary Billingshurst M. 16.10.1586 D. 27.9.1637	
<u>NICHOLAS</u> D. 17.6 or 29.9.1666	=	Maria Ancell M. 29.6.1653	
<u>NICHOLAS</u> B. 1640 D. 5.9.1696	=	Joan (1 <sup>st</sup> wife) D. 21.2.1684	= Thomasina Boxall (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) M. 9.9.1688
<u>NICHOLAS</u> B. 9.1668 D. 1.3.1727	=	Ann D. 31.3.1712	
<u>NICHOLAS</u> B. 30.8.1700 D. 24.2.1783	=	Alice Tice (2 <sup>nd</sup> wife) M. 29.5.1748 (Seale) D. 1.3.1795	= Elizabeth Moor (1 <sup>st</sup> ) M. 20.10.1730 (Peper Harow) D. 30.7.1746
<u>RICHARD</u> B. 3.7.1750	=	Anne Sibley M. 3.2.1774	Elstead by licence
<u>RICHARD</u> B. 14.3.1777	=	Mary	
<u>FREDERICK</u> B. 27.2.1804 D. 1888	=	Emma Darvill M. 23.2.1841 D. 1869	
<u>FREDERICK FLOAT</u> B. 8.5.1842	=	Emily Churchman M. 1871	
<u>ERNEST FREDERICK</u> B. 31.5.1873	=	Ada Florence Rose	
<u>FREDERICK RAYMOND</u> B. 21.9.1903	=	Mary Emily Simpson B. 31.7.1903 M. 14.4.1926 St Nicholas', Guildford	
<u>JOHN FREDERICK</u> B. 11.3.1929	=	Hazel Patricia Crunden M. 1.9.1952 St John's, Busbridge, Godalming	
<u>PETER JOHN FREDERICK</u> B. 10.11.1953			

## 1. BY-THE-WAY

### POLSHOT

If I was to live my life again I would not wish to alter it in any way. As a farmer I have led a full and interesting life covering many aspects in agriculture, showing, judging, business, part-time soldiering, hunting, Master of Foxhounds, yachting, travelling and meeting many interesting people. Since 1940 we have entertained visitors from over seventy countries at Eashing, including Russia, Japan and leading nations of the world. I have been fortunate in having an understanding wife who, though not of country stock, is always so interested in agriculture and country pursuits, thus being an ideal farmer's wife. We celebrated our Golden Wedding in April 1976. Our son, John, now farms Eashing. Our daughter, Janet, and her husband John were farming in Ireland for several years, returned to England in 1979 and have since bought a farm in Wiltshire. John's son, Peter, returned to the United Kingdom in December 1975, having spent four years in New Zealand and Australia. It is hoped he will carry on the family tradition. He now has a partnership in the Eashing Park Estate, and is a partner in his father's farming interests, as well as being Company Manager of F. Raymond Stovold Limited who retail over 2,000 gallons of milk daily.

Little did I think when we moved from Polshot to Lydling in 1906 that it would be the last occasion Stovolds would live in the ancestral home, occupied by the family for several generations until sold by Grandmother Emily Stovold in 1922. This was left to her in Grandfather's will dated 1873. He died at Broomleaf Farm in 1917. The house was built in the fourteenth century as an open hall house of four bays. The solar bedroom is jettied a little way over the open hall. A seventeenth century wing was added on the west end. The house comprised of an office, four bedrooms, boxroom and a large kitchen with scullery, dairy and other outhouses attached. The buildings included a large barn, a granary on iron quoins, (supposed to prevent rats and mice entering the building), stables and loose boxes, a loft, coach house, harness room and pig sties etc. Surrounding the large garden, tennis court and ornamental ponds was pasture and arable land of about thirty-five acres, bordered on the eastern side by the River Wey and adjoining Major Howard's Hampton Estate, now owned by Richard Thornton. The rest of the farm was bounded by the Elstead-Farnham and Puttenham roads.

Records in the Elstead Church Register are from the time baptisms were locally recorded. The first name to appear being Edward Stovall in January 1563. For many generations Polshot was the hub of the family farming activities. Farms in the area included Thundry, Turners, Fulbrook, etc., all were within easy reach of Farnham, Tilford, Shackleford and Aldershot, where other farms were situated.

It is thought the name "Polshot", is derived from Pole and Shed. Poles were used for drying hay. It may have been a pole store for the monks of Waverley Abbey, Farnham, who had large interests in the area. Oxenford Farm, Elstead, was granted to Waverley before 1147. From then until now Cranford was a Cistercian Monastery.

After leaving Polshot, the house and farms were let to a distant cousin, Charles Webb, who had returned from farming in New Zealand, with a very "horsey" wife. Their children, Ivor and Una were practically brought up in the saddle. We had many pleasant years playing cowboys and Indians and numerous other games that children get up to, on and off their ponies. During his time at Polshot he was Secretary of the Surrey farmers Agricultural Association of which my father was a Director for many years and of which in the 1960's I became Chairman. Nell, during the war was the first lady Whipper-In of the Chiddingfold Hunt. She returned to New Zealand after the war with Ivor and Una. Charles enlisted in the New Zealand Artillery early in the 1914/18 war. It was just after Armistice Day, 11<sup>th</sup> November 1918, his wife heard he was killed in action at Beaurainies, near Le Quesnoy, on 1<sup>st</sup> November.

I did not know it at the time but we were related to the Webbs. Charles' mother, whom we called "Aunt Dot", was sister to our grandmother Rose, both being daughters of a very successful farmer at Bentley, near Farnham. We were very friendly with Charles' sister, Aunt Ethel and her husband, Ernest Blaire Dowsett, (Uncle Dow), who did so well as a Dental Surgeon, attaining the position of Senior Dental Surgeon at Guy's Hospital. Before the war he was a Lieutenant Colonel of the Royal Army Medical Corps (Territorial) and was training when war was declared and saw service in France, winning the D.S.O. He also served in Salonica and finally with General Allenby in Egypt and Palestine. Their daughter, Joan, and I were great friends and I spent many holidays with them at Streatham and during summer holidays at Selsey. This must have been about 1919-20.

Uncle Percy Webb, husband of Aunt Dot, won many decorations as did many of his relations. One in particular, Sir Aston Webb, an Architect, was responsible for many important buildings. He designed The Admiralty Arch and the re-fronting of Buckingham Palace for King Edward VII, who showed him much kindness. Among others were the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Imperial College of Science, South Kensington, also the Birmingham Law Courts, the Naval College at Dartmouth and the Royal College of Science, Dublin.

When Mr Fullerton purchased Polshot in 1922 the house was stuccoed, which may have been done at the time of the window tax about 1700. The plaster was stripped to bring it back to the original exposed brickwork. A large room, two more bedrooms and a bathroom were added. The barn was pulled down and the side wing converted into a kitchen, three small bedrooms and a bathroom also doubled the size of the dining room. A barn was built adjoining the tennis courts as a children's playroom. A lodge and a garage block at the entrance to the drive was completed about 1928.

The gardens at Polshot were extended to about five acres as Mrs Fullerton, an American, was a keen gardener, one of the highlights being wonderful delphiniums. A flood path, about two feet high across the meadows in front of the house, was seldom used until the gardens were enlarged. The Fullertons did not realise that the path went through the extended gardens. Some of the older residents decided they would use this again and had several years of pleasurable free walks, although the gardens were opened to the public eventually. Later the path was diverted to its original route along by the River Wey which divided Polshot ground from Elstead village. During the late twenties and early thirties the house was let on several occasions to Americans. I understand the Prince of Wales, later Duke of Windsor, visited the house and stayed there.

Early in 1976, I had a delightful chat with one of the oldest residents of Elstead, Guy Bovington, whose father and he were skilled blacksmiths. He was born in 1891 and in 1911 went to New South Wales, Australia, as a blacksmith when times were not too good in England. He returned in 1913 to help his father. When war broke out in 1914 he enlisted in the R.H.A as a farrier. He served in France throughout the war and was at Vimy Ridge and the Battle of Arras where the British Cavalry made their last charge. He returned and again joined his father in 1919. When the Fullertons were altering Polshot they uncovered a window which had been closed during the time of the Window Tax introduced in 1696. The original leaded light was intact and had a "Cockspur" fastener. With his skill Guy Bovington copied this fastener for many of the windows. In 1963, Bovington again went to Australia to visit his younger brother whom he had not seen for fifty years. He died in 1977 at Elstead.

An amusing story was told by an aged resident concerning the pranks father and his brothers got up to as boys. On one occasion they found the doctor's pony standing by a gate whilst he was visiting a patient. It was a dark night. They unhitched the pony, took it the other side of the gate, pushed the shafts back through the gate and hitched the pony to the trap again. The doctor came out, got into the trap and could not understand why the pony would not move! When he saw the gates between the pony and the trap he nearly had convulsions wondering how it could have got into this

position. In those days horse-drawn vehicles with iron tyres made quite a clatter. Straw was often put on the road outside the house if anyone was seriously ill.

By fortunate coincidence I did not completely sever my connections with Elstead. When Master of the Chiddingfold Farmers' Foxhounds during the 1950s and up to 1969, (when the Hunt was disbanded owing to lack of country), I hunted the Elstead area frequently. The Reverend Cyril Cresswell MVO, who was Queen's Padre of the Savoy, was living at Three Barrows place and farming ground formerly farmed by my family. His annual invitation for Hounds to meet at his house on Christmas Eve was enjoyed by many as hospitality was on a lavish scale. Local dignitaries were present including the Bishop on many occasions.

In 1953, Brigadier David Bastin purchased Polshot and about five acres of garden, the farmland having been sold to the Reverend Cresswell in the 1940's and added to Thundry Farm. He often hunted with my hounds, so you can imagine the thrill it gave me to hold meets at his home, especially during his year as High Sheriff of Surrey. He was a very active member of the Surrey County Council, becoming Chairman in 1975. He has been most helpful to me not only with the history of Polshot but also in my capacity as President of the Surrey County Agricultural Society. Brigadier Bastin, being a keen hunting man, immediately turned three acres of gardens into paddocks. He also cut off the wing containing the kitchen, three small bedrooms and a bathroom which was subsequently turned into a self-contained cottage.

Brigadier Bastin sold Polshot to James Harris in [blank] , his wife Margaret and their children made the house into a real family home once again. They are a delightful couple with whom we have become very friendly as they are so interested in the past history of Polshot.

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Information received from Maurice Exwood (Domestic Buildings Research Group (Surrey)).

### Window Tax

This was a house tax introduced in 1696. Every inhabited house had to pay 2/- per annum. Those with ten windows an extra 4/- p.a. and those with 20, 8/- p.a. extra.

The tax was altered about twenty times (usually an increase), and finally abandoned in 1850.

## 2. LYDLING

In 1906 we moved to Lydling, an Elizabethan house, built of Bargate stone excavated from the Estate. A long wall enclosed the front gardens. The house was larger than Polshot having three floors. It was to be my home for the next 21 years.

It was an interesting house. Many windows had been filled in during the time of the Window Tax, an early tax dodge no less. The front door opened into a hall with a large open fireplace, an inglenook on each side. At one end was an oak refectory table, a form fixed to the wall and a form on the other side, all made specifically for the room. The table was made for my grandfather for £1. Over a period of more than one hundred years of wax polish and elbow grease it had a beautiful surface. When sold after father's death, it made nearly £200.

On the left was a dining room and a breakfast room, leading to the kitchen, along narrow room, the width of the house with a sloping brick floor and door at each end. This was often swilled down. A large old fashioned black kitchen range with a high polish was well maintained. The only source of water was from a well beneath the kitchen. It took an hour every morning, even on high days and holidays, to pump water to the tank room in the attic. A back stairway from the breakfast room led to the first landing which as children, we always used as we were not allowed to use the front staircase.

On the right of the hall was a drawing room and door to the cellar with a hatch-way from the yard for beer to be let down in barrels. A jug of beer was drawn daily, for father to have with his lunch. Another door led to the side entrance, office and front stairs to the landing where the main bedrooms were situated. One of these contained a Powder Room in one corner which was over the stairs, three steps up from the room. Halfway along the landing was a broom cupboard in which Percy and I were imprisoned for punishment until we resented this treatment and kicked the door to pieces. It was never used for this purpose again. More stairs led to the four attic rooms. The maids had one, we boys another and the third was for any resident pupils, the fourth was the tank and box room.

The garden was on three levels, from the front garden one walked up steps to a croquet lawn and then on to the next level a grass tennis court. Beyond was the orchard and large kitchen garden divided by box hedges. In the middle of some shrubbery was an old-fashioned earth closet, a three-seater! One for father, one for mother and one for child, the holes being of different sizes, very much as described in that well-read book, "The Specialist". This was used for many years during our childhood. It was a hazardous walk at night-time with a hurricane lantern. There was no electricity, only lamps and candles. A "Delco" direct current electric light plant was installed during the 1914-18 war which started up when any switch was turned on.

My first memory of Lydling was actually from the time when I was sent away during births, to stay with maiden aunts for a holiday at Burton Bradstock in Dorset; childbirth was kept very quiet in those days. I was first sent away in 1907, when my sister, Marjorie, was born and again in 1909 for brother, Ken. As there was no sex education in those days I did not know the reason. We were naïve enough to believe that babies came from under gooseberry bushes! How dangerous a tale like that could be in modern times. Jealous brothers could easily take a newborn from the pram and repantit! [*spelling?*]

What happy times we had as children. Boys and girls dressed alike in dresses. I don't know the reason unless parents could not tell the sexes apart at such an early age! From dresses boys were attired in velvet or sailor suits for high days and holidays. The latter, no doubt, in honour of our Sailor King.



We were disciplined by a strict but extremely fair father and mother. Quite different from the present generation. We often had meals with a nanny and a treat on Sundays was to have tea in the Drawing Room, where mother used to play the piano and sing to us. We made our own amusements. If we were lucky enough to be taken to the pictures it was to see silent films. The nearest picture house pre 1914 was in Guildford so we were driven there in a pony trap. We went everywhere at this time by trap. Father drove a very high-spirited horse named Beauty which he also rode round the very large farm about twice a day. If more farmers rode horses round their farms today instead of using a Landrover to peer over their hedges many farms would be better managed. At least on horseback a farmer could ride round the perimeter of every field whatever the conditions underfoot.

Father rode Beauty in a gymkhana held in Grandfather's field at Broomleaf, Farnham, on August Bank Holiday Monday 4<sup>th</sup> August 1914. I rode her back to Lydling afterwards and she went to war with other farm horses about two days later. They had all previously been requisitioned by the War Department.

Mother drove a pony named Tommy which was lent to some of the farm women one day a week to fetch Canadian soldiers' washing from nearby Witley Camp, one of the biggest for Canadians. After the war ended it was very difficult to get Tommy past the various pubs, old habits die hard, they were obviously used as frequent stops by the women to and from Witley. We, as children, drove a pony to a governess cart and also used the pony for riding.

Father went to Guildford Market each Tuesday for a number of years, as was the custom of most farmers whose wives did their weekly shopping at the same time. The horses were left in "Durling's Livery stables" near the market. An ostler was always handy to take the horses and get them ready when required.

Godalming was the nearest shopping town to Shackleford where the above process was repeated on Fridays when wages had to be collected from the bank. There were two stable yards in the High Street, at the Kings Arms and the Angel Hotel has now been demolished.

I shall never forget the excitement when father bought a Model T Ford. This was the famous model which Henry Ford said could be had in any colour as long as it was black! Carbide headlamps, oil for side and rear lights! No such thing as windscreen wipers, etc. When we came to a steep hill such as Puttenham Hill, leading to the Hogs Back, one used to travel backwards as the reverse gear was a lower ratio than the forward ones. Afterwards father had a Studebaker which was expensive on petrol, which was difficult to obtain from 1914 to well after the war. Father bought it from a horse dealer who seemed to have an endless supply at 10/- per gallon – a fortune at the time.

From the 1900's Stovolds were tenants of the Middleton family, who led an affluent life at Peper Harow, as the following menu shows, when my great grandfather replied to a toast on behalf of the tenants. The dinner consisted of many courses, in French; no doubt a forerunner of the Common Market. Goodness knows how long the dinner lasted as nine toasts were proposed with ten replies. What a gathering of well-known personalities; The Honourable W. St. J. F. Brodrick, later to become the Earl of Middleton. He was in Government and Minister of War during which time he introduced the Brodrick cap for the army. We walked each Sunday to his church in Peper harrow Park, two miles each way. I have worshipped there ever since, my wife being Churchwarden since 1955, very appropriate as father was Churchwarden for thirty-seven years. Having used the same pew for over sixty years I was annoyed on Sunday to find other people sitting there. My wife said that as a Christian I should not mind where I sat.

Extract from Elstead Register concerning "pews": "Ordered by George Lord Bishop of Winton, upon a difference arising about seat rooms between John Stovolle and Henry Martin, they should sit

together in the same seat where they sat formerly: being of ye seat next ye pulpit; and both parties have submitted to ye same order this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of November 1674.”

Witness Edmond Parker, Minister  
Churchwardens – James Wheeler / John Tice

Mother had plenty of domestic help plus a nanny and later a governess until she could no longer control Percy and me, so we were sent to school at an early age. What happy times we had. Although mother and father were very strict and we often felt like walking out we later realised how very fair and kind they had always been.

Mother was one of the best cooks one could wish for and a wonderful hostess and organiser. We had wonderful parties at Lydling especially at Christmas. No television, or radio, only an old gramophone with a big horn, or the piano and singing and plenty of games in which all took part. All this was much more fun and not so artificial as today when children are entertained at the push of a button and become bored so easily. Father and mother had harvest supports for the farm staff and their wives.

Mother was very active in anything to do with country life. An ardent supporter of the Church, and a leading member of the Women’s Institute of which she was once President.

The parties at Lydling were great fun, a dozen or more guests for dinner followed by games of cards. Mother was a jolly good tennis player with a deadly underhand serve. We had some wonderful tennis parties of high standard. We had plenty of practice with my two brothers, Percy and Ken and sister Marjorie, plus usually two resident pupils. Many tournaments were held in the village, very ably organised with mother’s help. At least six courts were involved, all the big houses having one, with the finale at Hall Place, Shackleford, the home of Mr and Mrs Edgar Horne, later Sir Edgar. He was at one time M.P. for Guildford. Hall Place is now Aldro School.

Christmases at Lydling were renowned for hospitality, as described by the Editor of the Assam Review who, with his wife, spent an enjoyable Christmas 1937 with father and mother.

“The first night was spent in using up two cart loads of holly to decorate the famous old Elizabethan Hall with its traditional old open fireplace; the Yule log blazing its cheerful welcome, as ever, it’s ‘let in’ corner seats, made for quiet observation and meditation. A monster Christmas tree took up one complete corner of the Hall; heavy with gifts and twinkling little lights.”

“Christmas morning commenced with the house party’s visit to the wonderful, old Norman church (no electric lights), on Lord Midleton’s beautiful Peper Harow estate nearby. The famous host and hostess of this wonderful old home entertained in their usual hospitable manner and a party of seventeen sat down to the most wonderful of Christmas dinners. A monster turkey and an outsize in puddings, complete with the Christmas fillings, duly disappeared and the day’s revels commenced.”

“The editor distinguished himself by officiating as Father Christmas: complete with scarlet cloak and whiskers, he did so well all the village children requested him to come again next year. In the afternoon the party swelled to thirty six and by the time the Christmas tree was emptied the editor lost count completely. The usual Boxing Day Meet of the Chiddingfold Hunt was held on Hindhead but the foggy weather spoilt a perfectly good day’s sport and damped most of the youngsters’ spirits.”

“The editor had spent Christmas in Sydney, New Zealand, Tasmania, Melbourne, Perth (Australia), India, Las Palmas, South Africa, at sea, Paris, London and in Scotland, but from his vivid

description of Christmas in the village of Shackleford, six miles from Guildford, he wondered if he had ever spent Christmas anywhere else at all.”

### 3. SCHOOL DAYS

A few years after moving to Lydling Percy and I had a Governess. When we became uncontrollable, at the age of seven, I went to my first school at the Bourne, Farnham. I stayed with Granny Rose at the Grange, Rowledge and walked three miles to school with Aunt Barbara, mother's youngest sister, three years old than myself. When we returned one day granny said, "Go and look in the stable". We dashed out and there was a tiny shaggy donkey she had bought off a coster to save it starving, and a small dog cart. The donkey was crawling with lice. The blacksmith clipped its coat and when we collected it, it was like a little grey pony, except for its ears, smelling strongly of paraffin. Its fetlocks were about the size of a baby's ankles. We then went to school in style with much advice, "Don't sit too far forward or the donkey will fall, or too far back and lift the donkey off the ground. Get out and walk down the steep hill and on the return journey up the hill." As it was a very long hill we possibly did more walking than riding but still it was great fun! Granny was very strict. I remember that each morning the whole family, including the maids, gardener, groom, etc., came to the parlour for prayers.

In 1912 brother Percy and I went as boarders to Arundel House School, Surbiton, for two years. My reports emphasised I was keener on games, especially football which we played on the Surbiton Recreation Ground. In 1914 we moved to Normandale School, Bexhill on Sea, where I stayed until 1917. There were over a hundred boys' and girls' schools and few houses, compared with today. As we walked to church on Sundays dressed in Eton Collars, and "Bum Freezers", wearing top hats and clutching a penny for collection, I never dreamt my sister, Marjorie, and her husband Eric would later become Mayor and Mayoress of Bexhill. She and I, apart from father, were the only "horsey" members of the family. The Johnsons did a lot of hunting, show jumping, etc. Their daughter, Anne, worked for Richard Dimpleby for six months after she left school, at Danley Farm, Linchmere, Haslemere, helping with the horses and children, including Jonathan, who later took to show jumping with extreme seriousness in the illusive pursuit of international honours. For a time he was with Len Carter and rode Trigger Hill in major events. Jonathan is now a well-known figure in broadcasting, following in the footsteps of his famous father.

Normandale was a Prep School of about sixty boys. How pleased I was to receive my First Eleven cricket colours in front of what I thought of as a big pavilion. In later years when visiting the school everything appeared so miniature.

My son, John, went to Normandale in September 1936. The school was moved to wells, Somerset, in June 1940, owing to the invasion scare. This was unsatisfactory and he moved to Cranleigh in September 1940 and left in 1946. He was in West House and in the school rugger team of 1945 and 1946.

During his last year a friend, Johnnie Neal, had two riding horses. John shared in their keep at a small farm just outside the school bounds. I had no knowledge of this until one day the Headmaster rang to ask if I would give permission for him to hunt with the Chiddingfold Farmers' Hunt! John's son, Peter, was at Cranleigh 1967-71

I entered Cranleigh in 1917, the same term as H.P Jacob who later became Senior Prefect. He went to Oxford and was Captain of Rugger and later got his International Cap. He returned to Cranleigh as a Master for a great many years and at one time as temporary Head.

During my Bexhill days I was fascinated by Army camps, soldiers of the Royal Sussex Regiment, drilling and bands forever playing "Sussex by the Sea". It was war time so we naturally played soldiers with pieces of wood for rifles and hiding in dugouts, etc., these games were a deciding factor in my wanting to join the Army. I could not wait to get to Cranleigh and join the O.T.C and wear khaki, parade with the school band and fire live rounds on the ranges. Cranleigh had a very strong and well-equipped contingent. Field days and camps were very enjoyable. One day

Cranleigh came to blows with members from Eton so they did not exercise together again. Each term many boys left the school to join the armed services, the Royal Flying Corps being the favourite. The planes only had one engine, an open cockpit and bombs were thrown over the side. Cranleigh had one of the highest percentage of old boys killed or missing compared to other Public Schools. The War Memorial at the end of the drive was very impressive. This has since been removed. We had three call-overs a day to check on boys running away to join the services. Two of these were Chapel parades which we attended twice daily and sometimes three on Sunday. One marched into Chapel down a long corridor where photos were hung of old boys who were killed on active service. Each week more and more photos were hung, including names of boys with whom one was at school.

At one such parade a West House Prefect played a joke on the Master of the Week. When names of absentees were called for he replied very quickly, Shooter, Shotter, Little, Grey, Heffer, Sir. These were West boys who had been asked to be absent. The Master got annoyed and asked for the names again which were repeated very quickly. The third time when said slowly it dawned on the Master that they were genuine names. There were six houses, West, 2 & 3 South, 1 & 4 South, 1 North, 2 North and East. West was considered the best house. It had a large lofty dormitory with windows about eight feet from the ground. There were fifty to sixty beds covered in red blankets, a square box by the bedside and the usual "offices" under each bed. Just as well as the open-fronted lavatories, two long lines, one for the upper and one for the lower school, called the "Bogs" were at the other end of the school buildings. A walk of about three hundred yards along corridors and across the open quadrangle, was a very hazardous journey at night in all kinds of weather. There were only twelve baths for the whole school, obviously installed when the school played soccer, before it became well-known for rugger!

The baths on two sides of the swimming pool were filled by one control point so some were too hot and others too cold. A weekly bath parade for each house was in the lunch break or evening. No matter what the weather, we had to plunge into the swimming pool after a hot bath to prepare for the long trek back to the dormitories in windy passages and across the Quad. It did prevent boys catching cold. The Quad was tarmaced and is worth mentioning for another reason. Rather than give lines, as a punishment, boys were given drill either for half an hour or an hour. As this was done at the double there were hundreds of circuits, not made any easier by seeing the clock on each circuit! Now the Quad is grassed over, the corridors enclosed, new dormitories and bathrooms have been built, in fact it is quite different from the old days. It is unbelievable how we used to exist in the old buildings compared with the very modern set-up at the present time. But then again each generation must think the same.

Boys' tuck boxes were stored in a room under the "Music boxes". One felt sorry for new boys who would completely empty theirs the first week when boys in their Houses used to "sponge" on them. Two things were not tolerated at Cranleigh, bullying and sneaking, both crimes of the worst kind. I once saw the method of stamping this out during my first term. This was in the case of a bully. The school, including some masters, assembled behind the gym after breakfast where another boy would fight the bully bare fisted. This often meant "a stay" in the sanatorium so this was stopped in 1917. The "Sani" was a much sought after holiday. Good Matron, pretty nurses! I went there twice by deliberately catching measles and mumps.

After the fights were stopped another method of dealing with culprits was instigated. This was called "pay-day" and took place on the last day of term when the school formed into two lines on the North Field. The culprit was put in at one end and had to run the gauntlet. You can imagine he ended up with very little on, and certainly denuded of any pride.

West House Dormitory was often used to take the overflow from the Sani. The worst epidemic was when "Spanish Flu" ravaged the world and from which twenty-one million people died. We were moved out on three occasions. Once into tents on the North Field and twice into the Gym. Both

were ideal for “raiding the kitchen” during the night, until one group was caught. On one occasion the raiding party were at one end of the kitchen and a master at the other. Both stayed “doggo” for an hour until the Master withdrew. It was in November 1918 that the whole school was sent home which included Armistice Day, 11<sup>th</sup> November. On return to school one small boy remarked that had it not been for the flu there might have been half a holiday, whereas, of course, he only had a fortnight’s holiday at home!

We were allowed to take OTC uniforms home to wear in the holidays if we wished. I expect this was to impress our parents and small brothers and sisters what men we were! We also wore them when helping farmers during term time. I remember going with others by train to Baynards Station on a number of occasions to help a well-known farmer, Mr Johnston, with his potato harvest. This did not please father as he rightly said he did not pay expensive fees for me to pick up potatoes for another farmer when there were plenty on his own farm! Little did he know at the time, that I was the keenest volunteer to do anything rather than school work which I hated.

The four hundred boarders, only a few day boys were accepted, were fed in the very impressive hall, each house on a separate table. We used to supplement the rations with food from home and supply our own hams, pastes, etc. A lot of café-au-lait was put in the weak tea to make it taste like cocoa! We were allowed to read at meals which was very bad. There was no conversation as boys’ heads were in their books. When one parent queried this he was told that good manners should be taught at home! Mrs Mole, who kept the tuck shop, thought she could recognise every boy in the school and could do her own rationing of jam, chocolate, etc., allowing each boy so much per day. We used to bamboozle her by changing clothes, using mufflers, etc., thus causing a ration card to be issued for the tuck shop.

Apples were stored in a shed near the Carpenter’s shop, with slits in the walls instead of windows. By tying a penknife on a stick one could spear out the apples. A glorious feast was had by many until someone’s knife came off. Hundreds of apples were stolen before it was discovered. The Headmaster asked boys to own up. Over a hundred did so and we got “six of the best”. Whoever administered them must have been exhausted.

I used to “fag” for Edwards, the Senior Prefect. He had his study upstairs at the end of the corridor along which the music rooms were situated, not a very quiet environment. I tried unsuccessfully to learn the piano. I was often in a music box when boys went to Edwards’ study for caning. In spite of present day theories, canings had their effect. The option was open to the recipients to behave and escape, or default and take the consequences – a very good system.

In 1919 the Guards marched through London, the Prince of Wales (later Duke of Windsor) riding his charger at the head of the Brigade. Contingents from school OTCs lined the Mall. It was bitterly cold and we wore greatcoats. We felt very grown-up performing this duty. We left Cranleigh station early on the morning and assembled in Green Park for refreshments. I remember Eton arriving in their smart grey overcoats led by their school band. This was promptly stopped as only certain regiments had this privilege. We were hours on parade and quite a few boys “passed out” along the route.

I left Cranleigh before the Summer Term of 1920 for two reasons, one being that I wanted to get home to work on the farm as school became boring. Like Churchill, I was not very academic, and only went up one form during my three years, from MA to IVB. Secondly, my youngest brother, Kenneth, was in the Cranleigh Prep. He was brilliant and I knew directly he came to the Senior School he would be above me – a thought I did not relish. After Cranleigh he went to University College, Oxford, on a scholarship, obtaining an Honours Degree in Modern History. He went to Kenya as a Missionary in 1931. In 1934 he married Hilda Risdale, also a missionary. In 1938 he returned to Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, and was made a Deacon in 1939 and priested in 1940. He returned to Kenya in 1941 where he worked for the CMS, with a three year break in England, until

his retirement in 1975. In 1966 as Archdeacon he was awarded the Royal Africa Society's Bronze Medal for over thirty years work for the church in Kenya, and 1974 the MBE for services to Education and Rural Development in Kenya. In 1977 he again went to Kenya to help with the Dr Barnardo's Home in Nairobi.

A saying goes that the fool of the family either became a farmer or entered the Church. Father was heard to remark that he did not think his three sons had done so badly, two as successful farmers and one in the church!

How pleased I was to finish with school for ever. It was unfortunate I could not go to an Agricultural College as all places were taken with ex-servicemen returning from the war. The same happened to my son John, who was prevented for the same reasons after the 1939-45 war.

#### 4. BROOMLEAF FARM, FARNHAM

Broomleaf Farm was part of the Stovold family connected with Farnham for several hundreds of years. The first entry in the church register was in the reign of Charles I, when Mary Stovold married Symon Marner on 25<sup>th</sup> April 1625. The second entry was on 10<sup>th</sup> March 1645 when John Stovold married Mary Wiold. Forty-four Stovold marriages were recorded between 1625 and 1835. Many are buried in the Farnham churchyard but, unfortunately, inscriptions on tombstones have become eroded.

In the 1841 apportionment of Farnham, many Stovolds appear as owners of land. Those of any substance were Thomas (described as Runfold to distinguish him from the Tilford Green Thomas) 95 acres; Richard (of Aldershot) 54 acres; Thomas (of Till Hill) 124 acres; George (of Tilford) 108 acres and Ann, 86 acres.

In 1879, in memory of Richard John Stovold who died in 1877, members of the family farming in the Ayling Hill area of Aldershot gave Almshouses to the town. These have since been pulled down and an estate of twenty-one houses built on the site of the farm, named Stovold's Way, in recognition of the family.

The pieces of the jigsaw of immediate interest are Polshot, Broomleaf, Lydling and from 1925 Eashing. The first of the Stovolds at Broomleaf, as far as I have been able to verify, although there may have been others before, was my great-grandfather, Frederick Stovold, in 1841. The farm was about 200 acres, rented from the owner of Waverley Abbey, C.T. Nicholson. This was later sold to the Anderson family in 1870, who sold the land for building in 1919 and 1948. It is now completely built over.

The farm extended from Farnham Railway Station to Waverley Abbey. Many hops were grown as well as barley and roots for sheep and other stock. The hop kilns and farm buildings were adjoining the present railway station. The line from Guildford to Farnham was opened on 8<sup>th</sup> October, 1849, by the London and South Western Railway Company. A bridge was built over the line for the use of Broomleaf, as the farm was on both sides. Fares on the line were based on mileage, 1d third class, 1¾ second class and 2d first class. In 1893 the special fares to Guildford was one shilling and one penny return.

The farmhouse was a very substantial Queen Anne House, comprising a large entrance hall, dining room, drawing room, five bedrooms leading from a fairly large landing. At the back was a big kitchen, scullery, dairy and cellar. A large walled garden had a two story summerhouse in the corner. It had a large upstairs room and the garden tools and donkeys were kept underneath. It was a great attraction for us, not only as a playroom but as easy access to the donkeys.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1841, great-grandfather married Emma Darvill whose father was a prominent Farnham draper. He owned several hop gardens, some of which were interspersed with Broomleaf Farm. He owned two hop kilns which would, today, have been situated in the middle of the very prosperous town. As the kilns had to give way to building plans, no doubt, the hops were dried at Broomleaf until all his ground was eventually taken over for building.

I did not know my great-grandfather as he died in 1888. During his time at Broomleaf he was very prominent in affairs of the town and was a member of the Rate Committee during the 1840's. An extract from the book "Victorian Farnham" reads: "On 28 December 1858, Mr Vanner reported that a boy named Frederick Clarke of Red Lion Lane had been seen by a son of Frederick Stovold to throw a stone at the ironwork at the Bridge and knock off one of the arrowheads. The boy appeared in Court and tell-tale Stovold was awarded £2'. This must have seemed a fortune to a boy who bought sweets for ½d. I never discovered if the boy was my grandfather!



In 1895, grandfather, F.F. Stovold (nicknamed Squeaker as he spoke in two voices) moved to Broomleaf from Lydling, where he had been farming since 1874, and from where he had been running both farms since his father's death in 1888. When he sold his live and dead stock, before leaving Lydling, one of the entries in the sale catalogue, dated 4<sup>th</sup> October 1895, read: "Bay nag mare (a good huntress)". This is the only time I have come across the word "huntress" as opposed to "hunter"! In 1871, whilst living in Polshot, he married Emily Churchman, whose father was at the time farming Lydling. She was the tenth child. Her grandparents had eleven children. The seven daughters were given a dowry of £1,000 each and the four sons each a farm. The Churchmans, who were a very well respected Horsham family, had a church hall built in the town which was used as a canteen during the 1939-45 war. It has since been demolished and the land sold for thousands of pounds. There are family vaults in Rudgewick Churchyard.

Grandfather attended a dinner at Peper Harow on 14<sup>th</sup> December 1877, the seat of Lord Midleton, from whom Lydling was leased. The menu comprised nine courses, all written in French. There were nine toasts and ten replies. Grandfather replied on behalf of the tenants. Other well-known speakers were: Viscount Midleton, Viscount Lymington, Lord Cotteslow, Hon. T.F. Freemantle M.P., Earl of Onslow, Hon. W. St. J. F. Brodrick (later Earl of Midleton), Hon. Rev. Alan Brodrick, Hon. Alfred Lyttleton, Hon. Hugh Charters and Hon. Fitzroy Stewart.

Grandfather farmed Broomleaf until his death in 1917, after which father farmed it with his brother and granny, who remained in the house until the farm was eventually given up in 1920.

Father was a boarder at Farnham Grammar School from the early 1880's, when his father, F. F. Stovold, lived at Lydling. He used to ride a donkey from Shackleford and leave it at Broomleaf during term-time. A great sport in those days was donkey racing and grandfather owned one named "Little Wonder" which was raced by father or Uncle Willie, his brother, who served throughout the 1914-18 war and died shortly after he returned from active service, at Virginia Water. They won many races including the Donkey Derby. I have the trophy at Eashing.

In 1880 Henny Lind, known as the "Swedish Nightingale", borrowed "Little Wonder" for a charity fete. She was so grateful she gave Auntie Flossie (father's sister) aged five, a very beautiful doll. Her daughter, Cathie, still has it today (1979). Jenny Lind, a famous Prima Donna, caused a great sensation with her wonderful singing for some seasons in London and America from 1847 onwards. She came from Stockholm and as a girl sang in the streets. Hans Anderson was in love with her but she married the composer, Otto Goldsmidt.

I have two of father's notebooks, January – June 1885, when he was eleven. He was very keen on football and cricket – played in Farnham Park. Some of the entries are interesting. He owned two donkeys and worked very hard on the farm in the holidays at Lydling. He often visited Mrs Tice and her sons Harry and Percy who were about his age and lived at Rodsall, near Cutmill, about two miles from Lydling. One of Mrs Tice's grandsons was Alan, a lifelong friend of mine.

Some entries from father's diary of 1885:

3 <sup>rd</sup> February:	Had a fight with six cads
5 <sup>th</sup> February:	We heard Khartoum was taken
15 <sup>th</sup> February:	We went to church three times. Boys and girls were confirmed
16 <sup>th</sup> February:	Went to a magic Lantern Show
18 <sup>th</sup> February:	Soldiers went through while we were in church going to war
21 <sup>st</sup> February:	Heard General Stewart was dead.
6 <sup>th</sup> April:	Took two donkeys to Godalming Sports. Won first prize.



Both grandfather and father bought horse from him. All circus and fairground equipment was moved about the country by horses.

The pedestrian bridge over the railway near the farm was another attraction. Trains were steam powered and we watched them start and stop from the station. There was a great billowing of smoke, when they started which enveloped us on the bridge.

If the firebell sounded there was another rush out of Broomleaf to watch the fire engines. The horses were supplied by Robins Removal Contractors who had many in his stables. A great number were blacks as they drew hearses as well as removal vans. The harness at the forestation was suspended from the ceiling, ready to drop on to the horses before they were hitched. The firemen, who were upstairs, slid down poles to save time. The clanging of the bells was very enlivening and the horses went full gallop to a fire. How they were able to draw a hearse at a sedate rate after this excitement was difficult to understand.

In conclusion I relate a tale about the donkey boy. Each farm had one and they were not always very bright. My grandfather said to him, "go to the sheep field and get a turnip for the missus." The boy said "ow big?". "Oh about the size of your head." He did not return so grandfather went to the field and found dozens of turnips pulled up with the boy still trying his hat on each one to get the right size!

## 5. FARMING LADDER 1906-1918

After moving from Polshot to Lydling in 1906, my brother Percy and I very soon had our feet on the bottom rung of the ladder. During the twelve years to the end of the first world war every aspect of farming was firmly instilled in our minds. We were more in contact with father as Lydling was his farming headquarters. As we grew older more and more farming lore was absorbed. It was the chief topic of conversation, especially at meal times as there were usually two farm pupils living in.

It might help if I described the farmstead which was built on sloping ground to the south. About twenty feet from the house was a very cool dairy, built half underground, three steps down. On three sides were arched benches. Above was the granary where oats were kept for the horses. One had to go up six stone steps, under which was the inevitable kennel. Before the First World War a lean-to was built on the north side of the house in which was installed a Delco electric light plant. This was a joy after having used lamps and candles for so many years.

The fun we had in these twelve years and how much knowledge we gained. The first thing I recollect was helping mother or one of the maids collect eggs from the farmyard fowls. It was not long before I was allowed to collect them on my own or with friends. Unless one has done it one does not realise the satisfaction of finding fifty or sixty eggs during the day. Hens laid in every odd corner, especially under the horse mangers where the bedding had been pushed during daytime. They used to lay under grain ricks, in lofts, woodshed and any odd corner. In the spring they were more cunning and laid in stinging nettles, wood heaps, etc. The thrill at finding nests with ten or twelve eggs was great until we found we had collected a nest of eggs on which a hen was sitting to hatch chicks.

The stables were a great attraction as one used to help the groom or carters clean harness and brasses, etc. When I was about six I had my first pony, Taffy, which I looked after during the holidays. In the first stable a groom named Tinsey, looked after a ride and drive cob, Beauty, a driving pony, Tommy, and my pony. He was a kind and very efficient employee and worked for my father for very many years. He taught me to ride and drive and used to take me to shows when I was very young. In later years, when I had a larger pony which I called Katcha the Dancer, the name of a review appearing in London at the time, he also took me to Chertsey and other places for "flapping" races which I enjoyed.

He kept the horses, ponies, harness, traps, etc., in first rate condition. Father mostly rode and drove the cobs. When he went out one was either saddled or put to a vehicle and was always ready. The same went for Tommy, driven mostly by mother. Regular journeys were made to markets at Farnham and Guildford on Mondays and Tuesdays and on Fridays to Godalming to do the shopping and collect wages from the bank. Ostlers were always on hand to take and stable them, having them ready for the return journeys. It was the Bush Hotel, Farnham, Durlings livery stables at Guildford and the Angel Hotel, Godalming. Sadly in 1979 only the Bush remains but has no facilities for horses.

On arriving home Tinsey would be waiting. He lived in Shackleford, about half a mile from Lydling. If we went to an evening party he used to listen, at home, for the clatter of hooves, which could be heard a mile or more away, especially on cold, crisp and frosty evenings. We would often see him running along the footpath from his house to Lydling carrying a hurricane lantern. The photograph on page [blank] was taken with grandfather Stovold, father on Beauty and myself on Taffy, before the first world war in 1914.

In the second stable two carters looked after six horses with the help of a stable boy. They started work at 5.00 a.m with an early morning feed and groom, prior to starting work at 7.00 a.m. They

came back for lunch between 12.00 p.m. and 1.00 p.m. and were in the stable again by 5.00 p.m. They returned in the evening about 7.00 p.m. to “rack up”, groom their horses and give them their last feed and clean harness ready for the morning. This was seven days a week and there were no half holidays. Father would never let us be idle. We were soon capable of harnessing a horse by standing in the manger. Shutting it into a cart became simple, with practice, although the shafts were a bit heavy to lift. By the time I was ten I would often use a pair of horses harrowing or rolling corn. As there was no wireless or television we did not need much persuading. Even at weekends he would send us to help the stockmen or shepherds.

We had no water laid on at the time, other than the pump in the kitchen for household chores. The horses were turned loose each morning at 5.00 a.m. to walk to the pond about three hundred yards away, where they would drink and then return to stables as a habit. A man went with them to see they did not stray on the road. Water for pigs and cattle was carried on horse drawn water carts. A smaller one was used by a pony. These were taken to the pond, backed in axle deep and a man stood on a plank at the back and filled them by bucket. This was a job we enjoyed.

On the other side of the horse yard was a range of buildings, including a very large Sussex type barn, cattle yards and fattening stalls and a shed for eight cows and calf pens. One complete half of the barn contained stock feeding equipment. Machinery was driven by a Blackstone engine, used to drive shafting for cake crackers, mills, grinting, chaff cutters, root cutters, etc. A wheat rick was built each year on a permanent steddle. It was never threshed until the following June. This was built on stone quoins to stop rats and mice getting into the stack. In fact, all the grain and hayricks, twenty or thirty, were built outside as Dutch barns were a rarity. Employees used to take much pride in rick building and thatching. Many competitions were held annually for these skills.

Father was a strict disciplinarian and was to become one of the best and most respected farmers, not only in Surrey but over a wide area. Employees worked a six day week. There were no half holidays or annual holidays. On Boxing Day, Good Friday and Easter Monday they would sometimes get a half day. Many worked on Sundays, tending horses, cattle and sheep, especially during the winter. Sixty hours was quite normal. Father was very strict on timekeeping. He expected and received a full effort from every employee. Although a hard taskmaster, the men respected him and several families worked for us for nearly a hundred years. What good families, many of whom followed on with Percy and myself. Unfortunately, these long serving and conscientious people have to come to an end. The one I consider epitomises all these employees was Harry Davis, who started with father in 1906 and was still working for my brother just prior to his death at the age of 84, on 11<sup>th</sup> February 1977. I have set this out in another chapter as it is well worth recording.

By the end of the First World War father was farming about 1500 acres, having added the Peper Harow Park portion in 1917, including 300 acres of parkland, a herd of deer and 40 dairy cows which had unrestricted grazing over the 300 acres. I helped in school holidays, starting at 4.00 a.m. as milk was collected by a wholesaler at 6.30 a.m. The attraction may have been a blonde beauty called Billie Morris who was in the Women’s Land Army! She used to send sweets, etc., to me during term time. Pails of milk had to be carried, on yokes, about a quarter of a mile to the dairy at Peper Harow House for use in the Middleton household, some of which we separated. 1500 acres covered a large area over several miles. Father kept a cob saddled all day and would ride round at least once daily and see most of the men, numbering twenty to thirty. He wore breeches and gaiters and a bowler hat when riding or attending markets. Naturally I used to ride with him on my pony whenever possible.

There were two weekly markets, Guildford and Farnham, which he rarely missed. During the winter months 150-200 fat bullocks and over 1,000 sheep went to market. Butchers would give top prices and compete to buy them. The cattle were chiefly Devons, bought in Chichester market in the autumn from farmer-dealers from Devon, often fifty in a lot. They were sold privately. It

sometimes took three or four hours' arguing over ten shillings a head. If you had started to deal, a seller would not put them on offer to anyone else even if offered a higher price. When it was time for the dealer to catch a train back to Devon a shake of the hand clinched the deal with about £2 luck money to Percy and I. Hard dealings were the only way a farmer could make money. Cattle were loaded on rail or driven by road to Lydling. There were no cattle lorries as today. If an odd bullock had to be taken to market or a butcher, a horse-drawn bullock cart was used.

Store sheep were bought at Findon, Alresford, Wilton or Weyhill. These fairs catered for different breeds. In the 1800's. drovers walked them the sixty miles to Lydling at ten shillings per hundred, taking four or five days, some of the way on the old sheep walks. After the railway came they were put on rail to Milford Station. When Percy and I started farming in the twenties, there were often fifteen hundred on one train. They were driven by road to Shackleford or Eashing. Luckily there was not a great deal of traffic. After the beasts or sheep were fattened, they would be driven to Farnham seven miles or Guildford six miles. We used to help the stockman or shepherd. Later we had to do it ourselves with the help of a boy. Driving ten bullocks let out of a yard or sheds where they had been confined for six months caused many problems as they were often quite wild. With a stick and anticipation of movements, two of us would manage. Today, no-one acquires the knowledge we had then. The sheep were not too bad but walking twenty to market caused much steam to rise, making it quite foggy behind. Only one man was sent with sheep.

It was interesting how work was planned throughout the year, starting after harvest. During September and October there were hundreds of loads of dung to be cleared from yards ready for a new intake of cattle for fattening. This was put on stubbles or one year leys after the second out which was then ploughed in for wheat. For dung carting one automatically gauged the number of drivers required for each field. If the field was a long way off, sometimes five or six were needed. Two men would fill the carts, each holding about a ton. In the field one man would beck it out with a long handled fork bent over at the end and put it into small heaps about six to the load, ready for hand spreading. A driver's job was to take the filled cart to the field and bring back the empty one. All stubbles were ploughed before Christmas.

In November and December several hundred tons of mangolds were carted to the various rickyards for cattle fattening. They were pulled, stacked into small heaps and covered with leaves to prevent frost damage. They were pulled piecemeal by farm staff or travelling gypsies. During September about a thousand or more sheep were purchased to fatten, from Alresford, Findon, Wilton or Weyhill. They were folded on rape and turnips, turnips and swedes. The swedes were put through a hand root cutter and fed into troughs. Sheep were moved on once a day leaving two days folding behind for back feeding. It was the skill of the shepherds that ensured an even dressing of the manure which was so essential on medium loam. Wheat, barley or oats were drilled behind the sheep, as they were sold fat between November and the end of March. They were trough-fed with linseed and cottonseed cake, often mixed with dried brewer's grains. One hundred tons of linseed and twenty five tons of cotton cake was purchased in the autumn and stacked in the barn at Lydling. This was put through a cake cracker in the ration of three to one, as required, before being mixed and issued to the stockmen or shepherds. For beef, barley was milled to put in the mixture. It is interesting that no water was given to sheep or bullocks as there was insufficient in the large quantities of roots which were fed.

In the autumn and winter months threshing was undertaken. The barley was very suitable for malting. This went to the Farnham Brewery, delivered on farm wagons, two tons at a time, drawn by two horses abreast. Threshing took twenty or thirty days during the winter months. It was a dirty job and took a number of men. Two on the rick, two on the threshing drum (one to cut the string and the second to feed evenly into the drum). One man or boy, often Percy or I to rake back the chaff and cavings. This was the dirtiest job. Chaff from the wheat was bagged from the machine and used with oats for horses or to mix with mangolds for cattle feeding. One man was behind the machine to pitch the loose straw on to another rick with two or three men stacking. The

corn was taken off and weighed by the man working the steam engine. He would record sacks threshed on a slate, marking four strokes and cross off for the 5<sup>th</sup> ~~###~~. This made counting easy. Threshing was done by contract. Father was very particular that thoroughness rather than speed was essential to get all corn from the husks. The thirty or more ricks were each built for a day's threshing. Ninety to a hundred sacks, wheat at 2¼ cwt, 100-200 barley at 2cwt, or 150 oats at 1½cwt, all very confusing for present day farmers (1979). Corn was sold by the quarter, two sacks of either were equal to one quarter.

The only exception to the time of threshing was the rick of wheat, on the Lydling steddle, which was never threshed until June. The superstition was that if it was done before, neighbours would think the owner needed the money urgently to save bankruptcy. The same practice was adhered to when I came to Eashing in 1925.

After Christmas, when one often had very severe weather, men were put on ice cart, fencing, hedging, many miles of which was done by faghook, hedges being laid where necessary. In the worst weather five or six men would sit in the barn mending holes in the four bushel sacks, caused by rats and mice. We had lots of fun as children, killing rats as they ran from stacks being threshed. After 1940, it was compulsory to put wire netting around the rick and threshing tackle to make sure no rats or mice escaped. One of our jobs was often to cart water and coal for the engine which had a very large appetite for both.

About February or March thoughts of spring were with us. Ground for roots was ploughed a second time, the opposite way which was called crosscutting. This would be ploughed again before sowing roots, April-June. Ploughing depths were most important. Four to five inches behind sheep so as not to turn the dressing too deep. I consider many of the disappointments in crops since the 1939-45 war have been caused by one way reversibles where depths have not been properly controlled. I wonder if present day farmers realise how important this is. During February and March barley drilling was in full swing, the wheat having been sown in the autumn. Fertilizers used had to be mixed by hand, a very slow process.

The fertility of the farm was maintained by folding sheep and the use of hundreds of loads of dung from well cake-fed stock. Very many acres of carrots were grown as the soil was ideal! For several hundred years they were grown and sent to London by two horse-drawn wagons. They would load back with trotters, horse hoof and guano, all valuable to fertility on our own and neighbouring farms.

In April, ground was prepared for potatoes, having been ploughed at least twice, the last time about nine inches deep and possibly subsoiled. One much used manure was feathers. They were put by hand in the bottom of a bout. A smelly and onerous job, especially in windy weather. The potatoes were planted by hand on the feathers before being covered or earthed up. Later they were cultivated between rows and harrowed down to kill rubbish before a final earthing up. In the early 1900's, they were dug by hand. A good man would dig and weigh one ton per day. Digging was in September and October. From 1916 they were dug by automatic spinners and picked up into bushel baskets by twenty or thirty gypsies. Carters would continually go round the pickers emptying the baskets into horse drawn carts and tip into a clamp to make them into a vertical heap. These would be covered with good wheat straw, laid on like thatch, before having nine inches of soil put over to prevent frost during the winter. Roots would be drilled between March and June, swedes and kale being the last.

Early in June haymaking would start. Grass was cut by a mowing machine drawn by two horses. Much of the heavy clover cuts were turned by hand to retain the dried leaf. On meadow grass a tedder or kicker was used to throw the hay over or back to help with quick drying. It took a week to ten days to make good hay. When ready, it was pitched on to wagons by one or two men on the ground and two loading. It was well roped on as some was taken two or three miles to a rickyard.

It was put in a rick and well trodden. It was a skilful job for a rickbuilder. A gang for haymaking would be ten to twelve men. Later on sweeps were used, about fifteen feet wide with a horse on each side. The hay was pushed to the rick, often built in the field. This was a great improvement from my grandfather's time in 1830 onwards when he was paying £1 per acre for scything upland hay and 25/- for meadowland.

Although twenty to thirty staff were employed, they were always kept fully occupied. The shepherd and stockmen were full time on the land during the summer months, hoeing the large acreage of roots, haymaking and harvesting. About the end of July harvesting would begin. In the early 1900's, a self-binder was introduced drawn by two horses. There were two teams for each binder as they worked in shifts as it was very hard work. Binders were first 4'6" cuts. Later 5' and 6' were used, drawn by three horses. This meant two teams of three for each. The horses carried the weight of the pole on their withers which caused much soreness. Later a small wheel was attached to the binder end of the pole, taking the weight off the withers.

The first corn to be cut was oats. They were then stood in stooks of six or eight sheaves. Oats traditionally had to see three Sundays in the field before being put in a rick. They were cut on the green side to ripen in the stooks, resulting in the straw being useful for feeding to cattle. Wheat and barley was mostly stooked for a few days before carting although in a very hot summer it was often picked up behind the binder. Stooking, or shocking as it was sometimes called, had to be done methodically. A man would take two sheaves under his arms and put the two lots of ears together. He would then put two more sheaves on each side of the first pair. Each pair should stand independently so they did not blow over in windy weather. They also had to be put down the right way so that the longest side of the butt was facing outwards.

Pitching and loading the corn on the wagons was an art in itself. Sheaves were pitched up with the ears towards the loader to make easy handling. Each sheaf was "knead" tin to get close packing to avoid movement. Loading was done in a methodical way. If one was to pitch a sheaf the wrong way it would be thrown down. When loading the pitchers were most helpful and instructive. I remember once when I was standing on the wagon the carter said to me, "put your arse behind, Master Ray."

The same procedure as dung carting was adopted to take the corn to the rickyard, except that a trace horse was used to help as the corn was much heavier. I remember the famous Tom Parker telling me he used to pitch ten acres of wheat sheaves on his own. As this would weigh from ten to twelve tons, it was some achievement. Father used to use two pitchers and two loaders to a wagon. When the corn arrived in the rickyard the skill of rickbuilding was unique. Each sheaf was keed in tightly followed closely by another experienced man who was the "shutter-on". He followed closely the rickbuilder as he went round the rick and put another row of sheaves butt first up to the string of the first row. This was most important to stop any movement of the stack during the months it had to remain before threshing.

Putting on the sloping top or roof of a rick was another art. The rickbuilders were quickly followed by the thatchers. This consisted of two men, one to draw the wheat straw out straight which he carried up the ladder to the thatcher. Bands to hold the thatch in place were made from twisted wheat straw prepared on a womble. This was pegged on to the rick by about three feet long split hazel, turned into a hoop. It was important that they should be inserted downwards so that water would not run into the rick. Thatching was done piecemeal at so much a square.

This gives some idea of the farming year before 1919. By 1914 I had done, or helped to do, every job so was more qualified to help more during the war. Labour became very short as some of the best men joined up soon after the war started, Harry Davis, Will Taylor, Bert Davies, and others. Will was father's foreman and gave orders and paid the eight men based at Home Farm, Shackelford. I still have his wage book from 1911 until he joined up in 1914. This was very well



kept and the figure work was exceptional. His wage was 18/- for a six day week which was 2/- more than the carters, stockmen and shepherds who received 16/- for a sixty hour week. Overtime for haymaking and harvest was 1/- per night or 4d per hour with 8d beer money per day. Total wages for 8 men at Home Farm for year 1912 was £283 6s 8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>d. Insurance stamps for the 8 men were 1/9d per week. Father paid the other 15 men from Lydling. He would be in the yard ten minutes before the men reported for their orders, the same as Will. He would not tolerate men being late for work. One thing he impressed upon us was to make up one's mind as to what orders were to be given before the men arrived. In this one should be firm and show no signs of dithering. Nothing is more unsettling for men than someone who cannot make up their mind. If a mistake is made, one should wait until lunch time before altering work. Changing jobs in mid-morning was bad for morale, except possibly during haymaking and harvest when weather is a factor. This was essential when one had ten or fifteen men waiting for orders. Today, with only two or three men it may not be quite so important

Six of the cart horses were also commandeered. This meant breaking in several young horses to take their place. I need to enjoy helping with this. To get a horse used to a collar and to stop plunging about, it would be put behind a trace horse and in front of a pair of horses, in fact, virtually pulled along. The first journey would often be to the Hogs Back where Puttenham Hill was a good test.

There were five sets of buildings, Lydling, Shackleford and Michenhall. In 1917 Peper Harow was added. Much piecework was done. A few examples: to cut out a truss of hay from a rick, put it in a press and tie and weigh (56 lbs) was one penny per mole. Mangold pulling per acre, 40-50 tons was 9/- per acre, including heap and cover. Thatching, hoeing corn and roots was 3/- per day. A good man would flat hoe an acre per day. To single roots was about 5/- per acre.

Times were very hard for the farming community up to 1914. It was only by careful planning of work and loyalty and hard work by employees that saved many more farmers going bankrupt. Percy and I absorbed so much knowledge from father and learnt by practise how to do most jobs on the farm. He always impressed on us that we could not be good farmers unless we could do so. How right he was. During our farming careers we never forgot this lesson. Employees respected someone who could do the job they were asked to do. Father's men were known far and wide for the very hard work they did.

There is one story that would bear repeating. There was a farmer, Mr X. nearby who was too lenient with his men. He eventually went bankrupt and shot himself. A farmer is quoted as saying the different was that Mr X would go on his annual fortnight's holiday leaving his large staff sufficient work which could have been done in a week. If they nearly completed, he would make a great fuss of them by giving extra money. On the other hand, father would seldom take a holiday but if he did it would only be for a week. He would leave instructions for enough work for a fortnight. When he returned he expected it finished which it always was. The men really put their backs into the job to give him a pleasant surprise on his return.

Although times were bad there were a great number of summer and fatstock shows, ploughing matches, farm competitions, etc, both for farmers and employees. We were taught how to prepare horses, fatstock and sheep for the show-ring and how to show them to the best advantage. There are so many tricks which help. One I remember was when showing pulled root. Six mangolds would be selected for a class. The judges had a spade and cut one or two in half to see if they were hollow which would lose a competitor many points. It was seldom that Percy or my exhibits would be hollow. Before pulling selected specimens from the field, we used one of Mother's hat pins to push through the crown. With a delicate touch one could discover if they were hollow or not!

Everything went on much as usual until August 1914 when war was declared. The sudden loss of several men and horses to the forces made things extremely difficult for a time. Later on more food

production was called for. The country had foolishly neglected agriculture over a great many years. It was obvious when U Boats started sinking thousands of tons of shipping, many carrying food, more drastic action was needed. Farmers responded as always in an emergency. Land girls were recruited in large numbers. Father had several jolly good ones. Later on as more men were called up the situation became worse and many German prisoners for war were supplied by the War office, under armed guards. They were helpful and efficient. In addition much more gypsy labour was employed for seasonal work. When the war had been going for two or three years tractors were being sent from America to help. I think father had a Titan and an Overtins [spelling?]. At the end of the war he also had one of the first Fordsons. All tractors were on iron wheels, with cleats for heavy going, over which a band was put for travelling on the road. No luxuries like today. It had to be cranked by hand to start. It was noted for backfiring and many people had broken arms. Father kept telling the men and us never to put our thumb over the starting handle. For years father would send a pair of horse to open and close furrows on ground being ploughed. He never trusted a tractor driver to get a straight furrow.

Farmers gradually got more confident, money-wise and exceeded all expectations in food production. Potato growing showed a vast increase. We were in the fortunate position of being neat two of the largest camps in the U.K. Aldershot, the "home of the British Army" and Witley Camp, Milford. This was the chief camp for thousands of Canadians. We had hundreds of loads of horse manure from Witley. It used to be delivered on G.S wagons drawn by two or four horses or mules which were the most stubborn brutes imaginable. I have seen four of them get stuck with about one ton on board. Father would send a farm horse and pull it out easily. Sometimes as many as twenty or thirty loads would arrive at one time. The Canadians built a wooden buildings shopping centre adjoining the camp. It was known as "Tin Town". Canadians, having double the pay of British Troops were "rooked" right, left and centre. One Canadian Officer, who used to visit Lydling very often, told us he went into one of the shops to buy a pipe. The girl who was serving him went into the back room and asked someone how much she should charge an officer for the 4/- pipe. The answer was 8/-. The Canadians finally set light to the place and burnt it to the ground.

The camp was demolished in 1920. Nice tarmac roads, drainage, etc., all hacked up and allowed to return to rough common ground. It was rebuilt for Canadians during the 1939-45 war and the same process repeated. I wonder, shall I live to see it built for a third time? When the first camp was demolished it was an opportunity for farmers to purchase materials very cheaply from which to erect Dutch type barns. The galvanised horse water troughs were nearly given away and father bought many. I am still using several at Eashing (1979). They are in excellent condition and not even rusty! I remember father bought about 5cwt cut wire nails. They were mostly bent, having been pulled out of timber. I can see now five or six men, on a wet day at Lydling, straightening them on plough shares. This shows how low agricultural wages were.

Father always had two premium pupils living with us as family. One I well remember at the beginning of the war was Bob Baker. He had to get up at 5.00 a.m but no alarm clock would wake him. Eventually, Harry Davis, the carter, had a brilliant idea which solved the problem. He got Bob to tie some string on his bedclothes and let the end dangle in the stable yard. When he arrived at 5.00 a.m to do his horses, he would pull the string and remove Bob's bedclothes.

The two pupils in 1916-1918 were Alan Tice and Cedric Gibbs. Alan left in 1918 and joined the 11<sup>th</sup> Hussars and saw service in Egypt. He did not realise that when he signed his enlistment papers that he had signed on for seven years, with five in the Reserves. As his future life was farming and he was urgently needed at home his mother bought him out on 1921 for £35.00 Cedric, when he left, joined the Rhodesian Police. They joined in so well with the family. Cedric played the piano and sing-songs were held nearly every evening. Especially when the Canadians visited which they did frequently.

Alan recalls, in a book he wrote, of his enjoyable time at Lydling and how much knowledge he gained from father and from other knowledgeable visitors. A quote sums up two enjoyable aspects of his pupilage:

“When the shooting season for pheasants came to an end, neighbouring farmers would be invited round for a day’s sport of rabbit shooting; they would each bring one or two dogs. It was a day to meet friends and thoroughly enjoy ourselves before we all got too busy. We would assemble about ten o’clock in the morning and after a “lecture” which stressed on us that we must not shoot hen pheasants, that we could shoot hares, rabbits, foxes and cock pheasants. Then away we would go, the keeper would hunt the dogs, quite an assortment of all breeds and the guns would line up in the “rides” to await the rabbits, etc., as they came running through the undergrowth and by the time we stopped for lunch we would have a “bag” of about sixty head. The lunch break was very enjoyable. We would help ourselves to cold sausages, cheese, pickled onions, new bread and butter, and to beer, this would all be brought out in a pony trap and set out in one of the farm buildings. It was fun too to listen to all the yarns about the good old days the keeper would spin, he was the last one left, the others having enlisted in the forces.”

“At the end of the day the “bag” would be laid out for all to see at Lydling. The old hands would swap experiences of the day’s sport and a fair amount of leg-pulling and bragging would go on, such as “I have never shot better than I have today” or to excuse himself one would say “I would have got that cock but he was too low for me” “.

“At seven o’clock the gong would sound for dinner, and it was always a typical English country meal of roast beef and Yorkshire pudding washed down with beer, straight from the barrel. The jugs in which this beer was served were unusual; they were brown with a face of “John Bull” on the side. After dinner we would gather around the piano for a sing-song and Cedric would play the songs of the day. “Keep the home fires burning” and “It’s a long way to Tipperary”, etc. After which the evening ended with a game of cards, everybody would go home happy having had a really good day of sport and good company.”

“Another enjoyable time we had was when Ernest Stovold treated us to a day at the Smithfield Show, after which we had dinner at the Trocadero and then went on to see George Robey in a wonderful musical called “The Bing Boys.”

Another enjoyable time was going for picnics in a farm wagon. Horses were “decked out” with manes plaited, ribbons flying, complete with brasses and ear caps, etc. The latter were used during summer months to keep flies away. I have a good picture of about twenty of us enjoying a picnic in Broomfield, Elstead, in 1917. Alan Tice is driving the pair of horses with Cedric beside him. I took the food and drink in a Bristol cart drawn by the pony Tommy, who was decked out the same as the horses. I have a similar picture taken at Lydling in the 1890’s. The wagon was drawn by three horses in tandem. The two carters were wearing bowler hats. Grandfather is in the wagon wearing his usual top hat.

It is interesting to note in both pictures the carthorses are wearing “houses” attached to the top of the hames. Although most people think these were for ornament they served a useful purpose. If it was set these were let down flat to stop rain getting under the collars and pads, thus saving sore backs or withers.

Farmers during the war were very patriotic and ran gift sales, either for the Red Cross or the National Farmers’ Union’s appeal for a million pounds for the Agricultural Relief of Allies Fund. Father was one of the five members of the organising Committee and mother was on the Ladies Committee. I have a catalogue of one sale held on 4<sup>th</sup> may 1916 which raised several thousands of pounds. Father gave a bullock to be auctioned as well as a few minor gifts. Set out below are details of help already given which are interesting.

“Assistance sent to the Marne and Meuse from 1<sup>st</sup> July 1915 to 1<sup>st</sup> December 1915. 61 rams, 11 boars, 2 goats, 20 binders, 6 threshing machines, 40 harrows, 50 ploughs, 20 Canadian cultivators, 15 drills, 1,800 head of poultry, ducks, turkeys, geese, rabbits, etc., 800 sacks of seed wheat. Assistance preparing for immediate despatch: 1,600 sacs of seed oats, 1,000 head of poultry.

In aid of the British Farmers’ Red Cross Fund a sale was held in Guildford market on 9<sup>th</sup> May 1917. In this sale father gave a 5 year old cob. The sale again made several thousands. At the beginning of each sale a donkey was “Dutch auctioned”, i.e. someone would buy it for a few pounds and then offer it for sale again. The last bidder at this sale was father. The donkey had already realised £793 at various sales. In this one it made over £100. Father was the last bidder and took it home to send to the next sale. He was demonstrating how to ride a donkey in the meadow opposite Lydling. Or was he showing how it should not be ridden, as it bucked him off and broke his arm! This fund was also out to raise a million, having already reached £407,635. Some of the items of assistance already given were:

1. To provide an Enteric Hospital at Calais	£20,000
2. A fleet of 19 motor lorries, 10 touring cars, 10 motor cycles and 2 side-car motor cycles for use in France and Belgium	£13,870
3. Sent for hospital work in the Dardanelles and Salonika	£20,000
4. Provide a complete convoy of 50 motor ambulances for service with our army.	£32,500
5. provide a convalescent home at Montazah	£20,000
6. sent a further sum for stores at Serbia	£5,000
7. sent for the British Red Cross Hospital at Netley	£25,000
8. Sent for winter comforts for sick and wounded soldiers	£10,000
9. sent for hospital work in the Persian Gulf	£20,000
10. Further motor lorries, postal van and touring cars, for use in France and Belgium	£10,000
11. Sent for hospital work in East Africa	£20,000
12. Sent towards the cost of convalescent homes in England and France	£10,000
13. Provided for permanent maintenance of about sixty beds in the “Star and garter” Home, Richmond	£105,000

Bearing in mind the value of money in those days, it was a tremendous effort on behalf of both the NFU and Red Cross.

At one sale during the war, a 6d raffle was held for a horse and trap. This raised quite a substantial sum. When the winner went to collect his prize it was a clothes horse and mouse trap. He was the only one who grumbled so he was given his 6d back.

I still remember Armistice Day, 11<sup>th</sup> November 1918, as I was helping cart mangolds at New Barn. The reason we were home for a fortnight from school was the very bad 'flu epidemic.

After the war, farmers enjoyed about three or four years prosperity and then were again thrown into another deep depression in agriculture.

There was one incident that will always leave an impression on my mind. 1911 was a very hot summer and fire broke out on Crooksbury Hill. This was between Elstead and Farnham. It was one of the worst fires I have ever seen and lasted for many days. I used to ride my pony as near as I could and saw hundreds of soldiers digging trenches to stop flames spreading. As it was, it crossed the road but the fire fighters prevented the flames reaching the sanatorium amongst the pine trees. Devastation was widespread and the blackened countryside remained in my memory for many years.

## 6. THE YEARS BETWEEN

After the war ended in 1918, just before I was 15 I begged father to let me leave school as I was uninterested apart from games. Having worked so hard on the farm in school holidays, I was anxious to extend my knowledge of agriculture in the practical sense. I did not leave until the end of the Easter term in 1920, so the last year and a half of school life and father's fees were virtually wasted. I was allowed several free periods a week, with another boy, to study agriculture, or so my Housemaster thought, from farming books.

After leaving I worked at home on every job to increase my efficiency, including looking after a pair of horses. Later I drove a Fordson tractor, which had to be cranked to start (many arms were broken as Fordsons were notable for back firing), ploughing, harrowing, drilling, rolling, moving, etc. When I was old enough to obtain a driving licence to enable me to use the public highway, I drove the one ton Ford lorry, delivering potatoes, etc., to the army camp at Aldershot. It was a vivid red colour and mounted on solid rubber tyres so at least one could not have a puncture! Father was very pleased to have me at home as he was still short of labour as prisoners of war were gradually repatriated. Several of his men returned from the war, one with a leg off.

In 1920, father, mother and Percy went to France, in the spring, with mother's sister, Aunt Vera and her lifelong friend Miss Fabling. They had both driven balances in France throughout the war and wanted to visit old haunts again. This was the first holiday father and mother had for years. Mother went armed with a French/English dictionary, little thinking that French people could understand English. One amusing incident was whilst visiting a shop. She had decided what to ask for in French. Seeing her difficulty the shopkeeper said, "if you would speak in English, madam, I would understand you". During this holiday father put me in complete charge of the farm, giving orders, paying wages, etc. He was pleased with my efforts. This convinced me I was quite capable of running a farm of my own.

Unfortunately I could not go to an agricultural college as all places were reserved for ex-service men. We had several ex-service pupils who did two years on the farm prior to college.

By 1920 farming was well on the way to prosperity. Agriculture had saved the country from starvation in 1917 when German 'U' boats were sinking so much merchant shipping. Farm wages had risen from under 17/- per week in 1914 to 46/- per week in 1920. Farmers and workers responded a hundred percent and hoped for a prosperous future. Their hopes were short-lived and only lasted until 1920. After the repeal of the Corn Act in August 1921 farming became worse and worse. Wages had dipped to 32/- per week by early 1922 and by the autumn to 30/-. An Irishman's rise!!

From 1920 I realised how a government could neglect farmers who had saved the nation from starvation during the 1914-18 war. The Corn Act of 1917, to encourage farmers to grow more wheat, was repealed in 1920. This was the end of a short-lived prosperity for farmers and their employees. Farm wages had risen to the dizzy heights of 46/- for a 54 hour week in the summer and 48 hours during the winter. From then on wages declined two or three times per year until they stabilised at 25/- per week for the same number of hours. Farmers suffered very heavy losses in 1920 and a great many went bankrupt.

One incidence I well remember. In 1920 father bought 100 Hampshire Down weather lambs at Wilton Fair at £9 10s each, £950. He saw the red light and sold them to the Royal Farm at Windsor for £10 each. They were sent to Slough market at Christmas and averaged over £15 per head. Many farmers who purchased about the same time fattened them during the winter months and sold in the spring losing anything up to £4 per head. Things went from bad to worse. In the early

thirties I purchased 1,000 lambs at autumn sales for £938! Farms became derelict throughout the country and in 1934 wheat fetched the lowest price for a hundred years – under £5 per ton.

As far back as 1840 my great-grandfather was buying lambs at 30/- to 40/- per head. Drovers walked them from Wilton or Weyhill fair to Shackleford at 15/- per 100, a distance of 60 miles. This is when the “sheep walks” were used. The journey took three or more days.

If agriculture had been kept prosperous it could have saved hundreds of millions of pounds on imports. This would have enabled everyone to earn more money to purchase food and at the same time paying less taxes. Everyone would have been more satisfied and done a fair day’s work. Even in 1979 the government is crying out for cheap food, to keep down the cost of living, at the expense of the farmers. One would imagine the cost of living index is based solely on food! What about rent, rates, electricity, train and bus fares, petrol and many items which are taken into the index figures. Why doesn’t the government stabilise some of these items?

From the fuss trade unions make today when a wage freeze is suggested one would think it was something new. Many unofficial strikes are over differentials. Farmers have been subject to both for over 600 years. These were brought about by a national emergency, not a war, through the black deaths of 1348/49 which resulted in the death of half the population of England and Wales. Farm wages and hours worked were in the Statute of Labourers passed in Edward III’s reign in 1349. Wages were fixed at the 1349 (pre-plague) level. Workers were bound not to accept higher wages nor employers pay less. About 1562 Elizabeth passed a consolidating act. Despite these the reasons given awake echoes of the same sort of argument we hear today. Those who paid more wages than decreed “by secret ways or means” were liable to be put in the stocks and sent to gaol for 10 days with a fine of £5. Those who accepted higher wages could go to gaol for 21 days.

This appears a very harsh measure to enforce when one considers the rate of wages paid. Differentials were very marked. For instance, a bailiff or chief shepherd of 5,000 sheep was not allowed to take more than £5 per year. A shepherd of 600 sheep £3 6s 8d per year, a cowman or carter £4 per year, a labourer of over 21 years of age £3, under 21, £2 per year. Piece rates were also fixed. This enabled the hard workers to earn more.

## 8. EASHING FARM 1925-1939 (Second draft 24/1/84)

When Edgar Peachy heard my father had bought me a farm at Wakeham, Rogate he told him that he had reserved Eashing Farm for me when I was ready to go into farming, although many people had been after it. Mr Peachy had been at Eashing 49 years and was ready to retire but would not do so until I was ready to take the farm. His relatives farmed at Eashing for 50 years. When I wrote this I had been here 59 years! He was surprised that father had put me into a farm before I was 21. This must have shown the trust father had in my ability to farm on my own.

Mr Peachy and my father were considered to be two of the best farmers in Surrey. They both farmed 400 to 500 acres which in those days was considered a large farm; today, of course, this would be farmed by the big boys as a smallholding. They both had the reputation of sending some of the best beef and fat sheep to Guildford and Farnham markets. Neither of them kept any breeding stock other than two house cows each, i.e. one in full milk and the other dried off ready to produce the next calf. This was a most expensive hobby. It was alright during the winter and during the summer for the early morning milking but when a man had to leave off work in the middle of the haymaking or harvesting to come back and milk a cow it was not only a waste of time but very expensive especially as they usually had to walk to do this. The milk was often set in pans and skimmed off the next morning to extract the cream, the skimmed milk being either given or sold to employees. When it came to finding a bull to get a cow in calf this was also very expensive as one usually had to send them to a neighbouring farmer via bullock cart drawn by a horse.

I started farming at Eashing during one of the worst depressions from 1926 to 1939, when so many farmers went bankrupt. I decided to supplement my income by running a small herd much to father's amazement. I aimed to have about 10 or a dozen cows to start with as in those days they were milked by hand and they reckoned a man could milk 10 to 12 cows. He used to wear an old sack as an apron and turn his cap back to front so that he could get his head up against the cow's flank during milking. There was little worry about dirt in the milk or disease such as tuberculosis. In fact one of my cousins had a terrible face all his face through drinking milk and catching a carried tubercular. I even had a small tubercular spot in my throat which was removed and has never caused me any trouble. I figured out that I could keep a herd of cows and still produce the same number of fat cattle and fat sheep as Mr Peachy did. I brought two men from Wakeham – Fred Norrell and his son who I knew could undertake the duties of cowman. I bought cows from dealers and used to go to Beckenham, of all places, at 6 o'clock one morning per week and buy a cow or two from a dealer who bought some lovely cows in Buckinghamshire. They were lovely roan cows and many of them turned out to be good milkers. In fact one of the first cows I bought from him I named Fillpail. In those days we used to grow many mangolds. Norrell used to give Fillpail something like 5 bushels per day, much against the teachings of Robert Boutflower who at that time was advocating rationing cows. Anyhow I got some cows in 1926 and sold my milk wholesale to Mr Rothwell who farmed and had a dairy business at Milford, and later to Mr Hillsden at Godalming Dairies, later Lympos and Smee. When my milk was reduced in price and I could not get my 32d per gallon premium I threatened to start up retailing on my own. Mr Hillsden said he wasn't worried because my father wouldn't let that happen. This was like a red rag to a bull so I decided to go into retailing which I will deal with later on.

When I came to Eashing in March 1925 I took over the tenancy from Mr Peachy. This was the ground south of the River Wey and Ockford Wood which was a separate tenancy from Mr Graham Cooper. Lower Eashing and Hurtmore all came at a later date. Our landlady was a Miss Agnes Seymour Kerr, a spinster who lived in Eashing Park and was ruled by a butler named Boynton. She was an absolute recluse and Mr Peachy during his 49 years I think only saw her twice – the first time he warned her off the Estate as he thought she was trespassing and didn't know that she was his landlady. The second time was when she had him on the carpet because according to Mr Peachy's lease he was only allowed to use the park, which was about 100 acres surrounding Eashing Park House which included the pleasure grounds, (the drive at that time came through from



Bob's Corner direct into the park and the entrance by the brew house was the back entrance.) There was a limit on what we could do with the park and that was that it had to be used for grazing sheep or horses and ten bullocks. The next time Mr Peachy saw her was when she went for him because he had gone to Chichester market and bought 11 bullocks and turned them into the park. As this was one over the ten he was allowed she stopped him grazing any cattle in the park for 5 years. When I came the branches had grown downwards and were only three or four feet from the ground where sheep couldn't reach. The park consisted mostly of beech trees which were very shallow rooted and luckily for me there were about 70 or 80 blown down in one gale which then cleared the park of being so thickly treed. It was not until the war years when a plough was first put into the pasture land. There will be more about that later.

When I came here on March 25<sup>th</sup>, 1925 I had a year when I lived with Mr and Mrs Peachy and ran the farm. In a March tenancy the incoming tenant took everything over by valuation plus the straw and haystacks. The corn belonging to the outgoing tenant. The incoming tenant charging him for labour thrashing, etc. I had a most easygoing valuation, Mr Burt senior from Steyning did the valuation for me and Mr Peachy employed Fred Lee from Hewitt & Lee. It was most fair and Mr Peachy was so kind letting me have a lot of stuff for next to nothing. If there were so many sheep and a few odd ones he would say well don't trouble to value them.

I took over a very loyal and conscientious staff consisting of one foreman, 3 carters, 2 shepherds, 2 stockmen, 1 tractor driver, 1 poultry man and gardener, 1 carter boy, 1 labourer, 1 old aged pensioner of 80 years of age who used to do hedge trimming a 5d per hour out of which we used to charge him 2 shillings rent for his cottage. The majority of the above employees were in our own cottages as I took over nine as well as the farmhouse. Mr Peachy used to pay once a fortnight so I thought it would be of interest if I was to copy my first fortnight's wages i.e week ending April 11<sup>th</sup> 1925. After this I paid once a week. In those days carters, shepherds and stockmen were all paid on a 60 hour week. Ordinary men and stockmen during the summer months were paid on a 48 hour week during the winter months and 52 during the summer getting the same wages for either. There were no Saturdays off and no Bank Holidays by right although farmers used to give the men half a day on Boxing Day and Easter Monday and August Bank Holiday. Good Friday was a working day.

The farming at this time was completely different. It was many years before I ever grew two straw crops following one another. As we only had sheep and cattle during the winter months, during the summer it gave the men time to have their one week's holiday and do all the work on the arable side of the farm, i.e. cutting out roots, etc, of which we used to grow a tremendous lot for the sheep and bullocks. Most of the work on the land was done piecework. For cutting out or scourging an acre of mangold a man would get £1 per acre whereas for Swedes and turnips he would only get 16 shillings per acre. Potatoes etc. were planted by hand and at the beginning many of them had to be dug by hand until a spinner came on the market. For potato picking we used to employ a great many gypsies who used to arrive during the autumn to pick up potatoes and then pull the mangolds, which they put into heaps and covered over with the mangold leaves ready for carting back to clamps at the various buildings for the fat cattle during the winter. These were cut up through a mangold cutter by hand for feeding.

The sheep were fed on roots throughout their fattening life and also had roots cut up, sometimes as many as 200 bushels of Swedes per day which made a tremendous amount of work. The Swedes had to be pulled and trimmed before they could be put through the cutter. One of the first jobs I had to undertake in April 1925 was to thrash out Mr Peachy's corn stacks of which there were about 20. Thrashing was done piece work by contract. The ricks were built so that they would each contain 1 day's thrashing as it was not feasible to move the tackle in the middle of the day. There were no Dutch barns and the only storage we had other than ricks was two or three old Sussex barns where corn was stacked. The straw was handled loose ready for hand tying afterwards for sale, etc. One of the first lots of corn I thrashed for Mr Peachy was in Halfway Black Farm. I was more than surprised when the foreman, French, put a heavy horse led by a boy round and round the loose

straw as it was stacked in the other side of the barn. I saw this horse going higher and higher towards the roof of the barn which was very worrying as I had never seen it done before. The boy had his lunch on the stack and the horse had a nose bag and a bucket of water. I asked French how the horse was going to get down at the end of the day's thrashing as I thought it could not use a ladder. "That's alright master we just push him down on his 'arse' onto some straw at the bottom". This they did and the horse on this occasion and several others, was none the worse for his ordeal.

There was one very large rick of wheat built on a steddle which was 22 feet across. The rick was built in such a wonderful bowl shape until it reached the eaves when it was nearly as far across in yards as it started in feet. It used to take four men to throw the sheaves across. There was always a rick builder and a man following close behind, called a "shutter on". It was his responsibility to see that all the sheaves were kneed up close together so that they would never slip. Newman, our old aged pensioner, had built 49 ricks on this steddle and thatched it. He never had a prop against the rick to keep it in shape. Tradition was it should not be thrashed until June otherwise farmers would think you were going broke. I followed this principle for many years but in the end, as it happened, I needed the money and thrashed it early in the New Year. My father went for me over this and said neighbouring farmers will think you are broke if they see you thrashing this rick before June. I told him I was and needed the money and that's why I did it. When the rick was being built there was always a dummy wagon full of wheat next to the stack to take the sheaves from the unloading wagon before they were put onto the rick so that a man did not have to stand too close to the edge and put the rick out of shape. It often took 5 or 6 men to undertake the building. A few years afterwards I started using an elevator to cut out the dummy wagon and again I got in trouble as it was thought that half the corn would be shattered out. The fact was that very little corn was under the elevator and one did not have to pay for the threshing of that anyhow! One must remember that when one built from the field and stooks the corn was not as ripe as it has to be now before it can be combined. Many times we have carried on building that particular rick even when it was raining. It dried out before June of the following year.

Wages – fortnight ending April 11/25

Hughes	1 week	1-15-8	(carter)	
	Extra horse	1-0		
	Less Ins @ 5	1-16-8	1-16-3 per week. Fortnight	3 -12 -6
Beagley	Same as above		(carter)	3 -12 - 6
Harris	Same as above, less extra horse		(carter)	3 -10 -6
Winter	1 week	1-19-0	(shepherd)	
	Less Ins	5	1-18-7 x 2	3 -17 -2
Welland	1 week	1-12-3	(poultry & garden)	
	Less Ins	5	1-11-10 x 2	3 - 3 - 8
Humphrey P	1 week	1-12-3	(shepherd)	
	Sunday	5		
		1-17-3		
	Less Ins	5	1-16-10 x 2	3 - 13 - 8
H Humphrey	1 week	1-12-3	(tractor driver)	
	Less Ins	5	1-11-10 x 2	3 - 3 - 8
P. Humphrey	1 week	1-5-0	(stockman)	
	Sunday	3-6		
	Less rent & Ins	1-8-6	1-5-1 x 2	2 - 10 - 2
T. Mozey	1 week	1-12-3	(stockman)	
	Less Ins	5	1-11-10 x 2	3 - 3 - 8
Laurence	1 week	1-3 x 2	(carter boy)	2 - 6 -
French	1 week	2-4-0	(foreman)	
	Less Ins	2-3-7 x 2		4 - 7 - 2
Newman	24 hrs @ 5	10-0	(OPA 80 yrs old)	
	Less rent 2/-	8-0 x 2		- 16 -

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£37 - 16 - 8

I used to keep a horse to ride around the farm two or three times a day to see the men, especially as they were all working in much smaller fields than they are today. Besides this I think one was a better farmer by using a horse or his own feet to walk around the farm. Farming has deteriorated since land-rovers came into being. The farmers will not trouble to even get out and look the other side of their fields to see that the crops are not being destroyed by pigeons, rooks or rabbits. There were so many in those days and they often used to clear half a field before a farmer became aware of it. We used to put wire round many acres to keep the rabbits coming out of the woods. Shooting was let and pheasants used to be quite destructive.

In the 20's and 30's there were many more partridges and hares, which was a nice sight to see on an arable farm. Since the introduction of silage-making partridges have gradually disappeared as so many nests were disturbed. With pesticide etc. it makes their egg laying and breeding very, very difficult. Farming in those days was most interesting.

For the next 50 years my life was dedicated to agriculture. Farming is one of the best professions in the world and has more challenges than any other business. Not only has one to meet the whims of various governments but also has to face up to the changing seasons.

I will start with the spring of 1925 and describe a year's work which did not change for a year or two until I got involved in keeping cows instead of fattening beef and sheep. The first thing I had to do was to finish drilling barley which Mr Peachy had not completed. Barley was grown in the spring as at that time winter barley had not come on the scene. I decided to grow some potatoes and carrots as well as ordinary arable crops. Barley was grown after sheep had been close folded over a root crop. The shepherds were adept in giving sheep sufficient feed per day always leaving 3 days behind so that sheep could lay back and clear up any roots etc. still on the ground. We never gave the sheep water when on roots. A good shepherd would see that sheep manure was spread as evenly as an artificial distributor does today. There was no such thing as artificials as we know them today. Anything bought such as sulphates, ammonia, phosphates, potash etc. had to be mixed on barn floors by hand. This entailed a lot of work in breaking up lumps before it could be properly mixed and turned several times to get an even mixture. Behind the sheep the ploughing was done immediately by horses and not with a tractor, the reason being that a correct depth could be kept not to bury the sheep manure too deep. I blame tractors, especially today with the reversible ploughs, for ploughing much too deep which meant turning the fertility too far underground for it to be any use to a succeeding crop.

A carter would always be instructed to plough the ground 4 or 5 inches which was very important on our light loam soil as it was essential that sour ground should not be turned to the top. We used a sub-soiler, often drawn by 3 horses, to move the ground without bringing anything to the top. I am sure modern cultivations have brought up foul ground and weeds that have been dormant in the ground for hundreds of years. When barley drilling had finished I started growing potatoes and carrots which my family had done for over a hundred years especially as we had a ready market on our doorstep i.e. Aldershot Camp. We used to buy hundreds of tons of feathers on which to plant the potatoes. This was a very dusty and dirty job, spreading feathers along the bottom of the potato bouts before the potatoes were planted and ridged up. We also grew a lot of carrots as this ground is very suitable to get a clean sample. My family had grown them for over a hundred years at Lydling etc. Many of these were sent to the market in London. A man would take two ton to the market with a pair of horses and be there ready for the sale which used to open about 4 o'clock in the morning. He would be back the next day with hair and horse hooves for which we had a good sale in Surry. In fact the Tices, who were lifelong friends, bought much of the horse hooves for their hop gardens. It was an excellent fertilizer and at that time, there were thousands of farriers in London who had so much to dispose of. There was one thing we had to worry about, as far as growing carrots was concerned, that was the fly. We used to soak several hessian bags in paraffin

and put them on a long pole which was dragged up and down the field on top of the carrots which got rid of the fly. The next thing was the planting of the roots such as mangolds, swedes and turnips and possibly a certain amount of rape. Although the mangolds were sown early and were singled, swedes were not sown on this ground until about June 16<sup>th</sup> otherwise they got mildew. They were cut out after the mangolds, piecework at one pound an acre and 16 shillings for swedes or turnips. A man would do as much in a day as labour at the present time would do in a week even if they knew how to do it, which I doubt. Hedge trimming was finished by now. The hedges were trimmed by fag hook, the farm had about 20 to 30 fields on it and so there was a tremendous amount of hand labour involved.

As the men only had a week's holiday a year this was the time they took it as all the cattle and sheep were finished and away to market. We liked to get holidays over before commencing hay making in June. Lovely hay was made from one year lays which consisted mostly of a broad leaf clover, trefoil etc. How careful farmers were not to knock the leaf off the clover which was one of the best ingredients in well-made hay. There isn't so much good hay made today because modern machinery goes so fast and is so drastic that it literally would knock off everything worth leaving on. The method of haymaking was difficult. It took three or four days, even in fine weather, to build a hay rick. It did not matter about the size of the stack as you would gauge it by the amount of acreage you wanted to put in it. First a bottom was put on the ground of faggots. This was to keep the hay off the ground and one would get a certain amount of aeration under the stack. As haymaking went on for several days it was necessary to have protection against weather in case it rained. One would not think of putting a cloth straight on to the hay otherwise it would sweat and go mildewy. A pole was erected at each end of the stack with a wooden crossbar over which the ricksheet would be hung. This could be raised or lowered at will by a pulley at each end and if it had to stay like it for a week it was OK. The method of getting the hay to the rick was first done by wagons. Later it was done by sweeps. These were about 10 to 12 feet wide with tines about 10 feet long and about 8 inches to a foot apart with a horse on each side with a man sitting on a seat behind driving them. He would drive this into the hay which had already been put into rows and it was surprising how much hay would be pushed up in one go. This would be fed to the elevator by two men. There would be two or three men besides the rick builder to stack the hay properly and to keep it well trodden for consolidation. We had great fun setting up the elevator because this was powered by a horse which had to walk round and round all day turning a wheel which in turn turned the elevator. The horse used to go automatically as its head was attached to the middle of the turning mechanism so that he had to keep to the one circle. It was fun for young boys to ride the horse round for something to do, anyhow it kept them out of mischief. When the hay had been put in ricks ready for cutting into trusses for sale later on to the neighbouring farmers or owners of horses a second cut was taken when ready which was mostly used as sheep hay because it was not nearly as good as the first cut. The leys were then dunged from the yards etc. to take a crop of autumn sown wheat. As there were no cattle or sheep after haymaking the roots had plenty of attention so as to keep the rubbish down. We hardly knew what rubbish was. My father once offered me 6 pence for every dock I could find either in a field or hedgerow, for which I never got anything as he had none even on a thousand acres.

It did not seem long before we got round to harvest which used to start by cutting oat in late July of which we grew quite an acreage. These had to be cut before they were fully ripe to save them shattering. They were stooked 6 sheaves to a stook. It was traditional to leave them 3 Sundays in the field before they were put into ricks. This was followed by the wheat and barley when it was ready. We used two or three binders of 4'6" to 6' cut. The larger binders being drawn by 3 horses. This was the most punishing job during the year that the horses had to put up with as the weight of the binder and pole on their withers used to cause a lot of trouble. Later some bright person thought about putting a wheel under the pole to take some of the weight off the horses' necks. Two teams of horses were used on each binder. They used to do about 3 hours work and then have 2 hours rest before changing back again. When it came to carting the corn the rick size was determined by the amount we reckoned to be one days threshing. There would be 2 pitchers and 2 loaders on each

wagon although at a later date a good man could load from 2 pitchers. The art of getting a good load was as important in the loading as in the rick building. Every sheave had to be kneed in to get it tight to save it from slipping. If you had a good man on the load and you put a sheave up the wrong way round he would throw it back. You had to put it up with the ears towards the man so that he had the butt facing the way he wanted to stack. I remember the first load I loaded with a very good old carter pitching and he said, "Mr Ray, if you put your "arse" behind you you'll be right to take them when I put them up", in fact a good pitcher did not leave much work to be done by the loader. When the fields were some distance from the rick a wagon was being loaded, one at the rick being unloaded and two possibly between. The two kept an even flow so that there was not a minute wasted. When the field was cleared a horse rake would be put over the stubble to pick up any loose little bits of corn, which was very little and really wasn't worth the effort. When the ricks were finished the thatchers would come straight behind to thatch them in. This took 2 men, one doing the thatching for which he used a 40 rung ladder and a man at the bottom teasing out the straw to get it all one way so that the thatcher could lay it straight on to the rick. Although later on we used string to keep the thatch in place earlier straw was twisted and used. Hazel pegs were used which were put into the rick with the point going upwards and not downwards so that water ran away from the rick and not into it. A good man would only need two or three inches of straw to keep the rick safe for a whole winter. When thatchers got less proficient they would use anything up to 6 or 7 inches of straw and even this would not keep water out of the rick because of the way it was put on. When harvesting was finished one would get out the rest of the dug from the yards and put on the ley ground before it was ploughed ready to put in the autumn wheat. Also sheep began to arrive to put onto the roots.

Some of the sheep were from Findon, Sussex and were Southdown and Southdown Cross. The best fair we went to and which father did not miss for 60 years was Wilton Fair which was held on the second Thursday I September, where we bought the majority of our sheep. I must have gone 30 times or more, first when I was a boy and again when I was farming on my own. My grandfather also bought sheep at Wilton at the turn of the century. At that time they used to be driven back from Wilton by road. It would take a drover approximately 4 days to do the sixty miles for which he got paid the handsome sum of ten shillings per hundred. I have possibly mentioned before that this was one of the reasons why there were so many sheep walks about the country. The sheep used to amble along at their own pace grazing on the way and when it came to night time they would just lie down while the shepherd had a sleep. The reason why we liked Wilton Fair was by September the roots were ready for sheep to go straight into. It is interesting to note that at one fair at Wilton I purchased about 1,000 Hampshire Down lambs which cost him £1,000. This was the year so many farmers went broke and lost many thousands of pounds over purchasing sheep for fattening. Mr Peachy bought some for the same price and after he had kept them all winter he sold them for £7 10.0 each. Father who was very friendly with Mr Richie of the Royal Farm at Windsor sold this particular 100 sheep in December to the Royal Farms for £10 10.0 each. Although this only gave him ten shillings a sheep profit it was better than the enormous loss that he would have suffered by keeping them. These were sold in Slough Christmas market of that year fattened by his Majesty the King and I think they averaged somewhere about £16 a piece. Now the sheep were purchased the ploughing for winter wheat etc. was the next job to make certain of getting it drilled before Christmas. On this farm October and November were the best months. Before this it would get too much proud on our sandy loam. As these jobs were done mangold pulling was in full swing being done by gypsy labour after they had finished picking up potatoes. They were stacked in heaps which consisted of about 10 to 15 cwt. We were very careful and used to like the men to twist off the tops rather than use a knife. The reason for this was that with a knife one was apt to cut some of the crown away, this in turn would bleed then mangold so that they wouldn't keep. Whilst I was on the potatoes I forgot to explain the method we had then of digging them and picking them. They used to be spun out with a spinner drawn by two horses which scattered them about 1 yard wide. About 20 gypsies were employed picking up and they used to have cants measured out so that they all had exactly the same amount of ground to pick up each time the digger went around. They picked them up in half bushel wicker baskets. The carters would continually go round with a horse

and cart and empty the baskets directly into same before proceeding to the clamp. This was made in the field as there were no posh potato sheds or other sheds in which to store them. The clamp was dug out about 9 inches deep by about 3 feet wide and the soil banked along the sides. The carts drew alongside and shot the load into the pit. A man would be there to stack them up into a pyramid shape which was about then 3 to 4 feet high. This was a very skilful job as one did not want the potatoes to roll down. As he went along he would put wheat straw to thatch them in with about 6 inches thick to stop any frost getting in. As soon as possible another man would come along to earth them up i.e. put dirt over the straw from a trench each side. This was a skilful job as one would put a spit along the bottom and keep on all the way to the top on both sides and then put one or two straw vents in the ridge, so that any sweating could get out. I think farmers used to vie with each other as to who had the longest clamps. I know one year I had one so long that it nearly went round the field. When the potatoes were put up for sale the potato machine was pushed up to the potatoes. A man with a proper potato fork shovelling them in for sorting. There was a man turning the machine by hand as engines were not in much use at that time. They would go up an elevator and into hessian bags which could be weighed into hundredweights. This was quite an operation and a good gang of about 4 put up about 8 to 10 ton a day which is about the equivalent to what they do today with every modern machine you can think of. The difference of course was in those days men worked hard and kept going.

It was November and the time had come to think about purchasing bullocks to put into the sheds and yards for fattening. They were not kept for the purpose of making much profit as they seldom did, but they did tread in a lot of straw which was necessary to make the manure to put humus back into the soil. Our chief supply, mostly steers, were purchased in Chichester market. These were lovely red Devon cattle which were brought up by two dealers, Fred Harris and Rory [spelling?] May from Devon each Wednesday. We used to go to Chichester about 7 in the morning so that we could get in touch with the seller immediately his cattle were taken off rail. We often argued all day over 10 shillings per animal on a bunch of 20 or 30 steers which was the difference between profit or loss to the purchaser. Once a buyer started negotiating with the seller nothing would divert him from that deal. If a man came along and offered £2 more per bullock than we had offered he would not negotiate until he had finished with us. Several times we had been given £2 a head not to take the bunch as he had a higher bidder. Even when we purchased them we were given luck money. When we used to go with father before we were buying on our own he used to let us have this, which was a fortune to us. When we first bought cattle at Chichester instead of railing them home they used to be driven the 30 odd miles by road either to Lydling or Eashing.

On arrival back at the farm they would be sorted out into various bunches some were tied up in sheds and others were loose in yards. Those that were tied up had a chain round their neck for four or five months and were never let out. As many of the attending stalls did not have a gangway in front of the mangers for feeding it was a most dangerous occupation walking up between two animals to put their food in the manger. After a week or two they settled down but one had several kicks when one went up between them. This was the same when they were cleaned out every day. As the cattle were fed mostly on mangold they never had any water although sometimes there was a tank in the yards. The cake they had was mostly linseed and cotton seed mixed with brewers grains etc.. The linseed and cotton came in slabs which had to be put through a cake cracker, the ratio being one cotton seed which was a greenish coloured cake to three linseed which were more laxative. This was purchased during the summer months from Whittets of Weybridge, possibly 50 or 60 tonnes at a time to last the winter both for sheep and cattle. The next job was to start threshing. We probably did one rick if we needed the straw for litter etc. Hay was fairly plentiful as good farmers usually kept one stack from the year before. The threshing was a dusty old job especially keeping away the rubbish called cavings. Wheat chaff awns were bagged from the machine and mixed with oats to feed the horses. Threshing was mostly done piece work. Four bushel sacks weighed off as follows:- wheat 2¼ cwt. – barley 2 cwt – oats 1½ cwt, all daft weights when you think of today's metric system. These sacks had to be loaded by hand on to carts or wagons to take back into store until ready to be delivered to the millers or used for feeding. During

February we started drawing cattle and sheep, mostly for Guildford and Farnham markets. For many years father and I had the same pens reserved for us in Guildford market. Butchers knew exactly where to go to purchase the best lambs. There was no transport so the cattle and sheep walked to market, Farnham about 7 miles and Guildford 5. One man would drive about 20 head of sheep on his own and some mornings when they hot the steam was so dense that one could hardly see where they were being driven. Bullocks needed a man and a boy. This was a most skilful job and those driving them used to know exactly when to throw a stick to turn an animal away from an open gateway or garden if they started straying off the road. They came out of the sheds where they had been tied up for 5 or 6 months often quite wild. It was quite an art to get them settled especially if they were mixed with some of the yarded cattle who, of course, had been out all the time. We aimed to get rid of the beef and the sheep by the end of April and the whole cycle started again. I thought this would give an idea of farming through 12 months on an arable farm.

The next big event happened in 1926 on April 14<sup>th</sup> when I married Mary Emily Simpson who was one of three daughters of Mr & Mrs Simpson. Her father and uncle owned a very large store in Guildford called Simpson Brothers. I first met Mary at a garden fete at father's home, Lydling. Afterwards at a beagle meet, when many used to go back into Lydling Hall to have tea, etc. I suppose we were engaged for about a year until the great day was fixed. We were married at Guildford from her home "The Turrets", Portsmouth Road on April 14<sup>th</sup> 1926. When I was ready to go to the wedding the farm was on fire at the hovel. A boy named Hedger who was burning hedge trimmings which he let get away from him and it was burning fiercely. I didn't know whether to go to the wedding leaving the farm to burn or what to do. However, I decided it was important to go to the wedding and this I did, driven to the church by my brother Percy who was best man. I was rushed to the church and the policeman on duty said "There is no hurry, sir, the bridegroom hasn't arrived yet." I said, "No, he hasn't because he happens to be me". So he said, "you had better look sharp then", which I did. We went for about a 10 day honeymoon with a car trip through southern England – Devon, Cornwall and up through the Wye Valley, which in April is very beautiful. Father gave us a car for a wedding present which was a Clyno. This was one of the only new cars I had in my life. I always bought second hand ones like Lea-Francis, Bentleys, Rovers, Jaguars, Mercedes etc. I bought them second hand because I objected to paying tax on the original purchase.

My farming from that time onwards changed at Eashing because the bullocks were gradually replaced by cows although I kept fattening sheep for many years. After my honeymoon I had to decide on what to do about a dairy herd. I had no buildings suitable to start a herd, only a few old bullock stalls by the farmhouse. I started with mixed breeds of Ayrshires, Fresians, Shorthorns but at that time no Guernseys. I bought these from dealers and quite a few from Alfred Tilley who was a dealer in Guildford market. I went to Beckenham on several occasions as there was a dealer there who bought some beautiful roan Shorthorns in Buckinghamshire. They arrived by rail at 6 o'clock in the morning and if you wanted first pick you had to be there by half past six. The only sheds I had to keep cows was the long shed now part of the ice cream set up garage and a few loose boxes on the side of the barn. I made cow stalls as best I could in the barn and put a loft over half of it for hay, etc. This is still in the barn although it was illegal even then because of hygiene where cows were milked. I managed to get two rows in parts of the barn and a third by feeding over the wall to the outside of the barn where the present calf pen is. The milk was carried to one of the sheds where it was cooled and put into 17 gallon churns ready for collection. It was just before the war when I built the first half of a new cow stall which is now the open yard nearest to the house. I had to get better accommodation because I had now several Guernseys. It was about 1932 when I first went to Guernsey to purchase young calves as they were not only cheaper but also at that age to transport them by boat was much less. I used to go with a Captain Addis who was manager of Lord Iveagh's Guinness Farm Dairy at Woking. They also had an estate at Elvenden, Suffolk where they had two or three hundred. The purchase price in Guernsey was about £1 per month and so we did have certificates with them. Milk yields were produced when requested of dams of the calves, only one record from each cow which was a lifetime one. I joined the British Guernsey Cattle Society



about 1930 so as to keep the cows' pedigree. The first herd book I had is dated 1933 in which there are six Guernseys under my name and I had the prefix name of Eashing.

Later on I went on the Council and was their President in 1960. It used to take a long time to buy the calves. We would probably only be over for 3 days and we bought them through an agent named Frampton, a well-known character on the island. We went round dozens of farms but it always appeared he took us to the worse ones first and after about 2 days if we hadn't bought anything he gradually produced some better cattle for us to look at. After we had been there several times we went to herds where we found we could get the best cattle. One of my favourites was Les Norgits owned by a man named Browning where I got some exceptional cattle. We went to Alderney and bought several calves but there were few herds of 5 or 6 cows. It was the most terrible crossing to get to the island. We crossed on the old cattle boat that had sunk at least 3 times and been brought to the surface again. It had to pass the Caskets Lighthouse which is one of the most dangerous seas anywhere. I remember once the lifeboat had to go out to get a man off the Caskets because he had appendicitis. The lifeboat never got anywhere near at all owing to the roughness of the sea, until several days later. On one occasion when we went to Alderney, Captain Addis took his local garage owner, West, from Woking for the trip. We stayed in the one hotel which was halfway up the main street (one had to pay a shilling for a bath, the hot water to fill it with was carried upstairs). To cut a long story short we bought some cattle on the tip of the island from a very gypsy sort of man who couldn't even write. One evening West came back to the hotel very late with this man and both drunk. He had bought 4 heifers. Captain Addis and I tried to stop him because we said he had nowhere to put them even if he got them over to England. Anyhow, to cut a long story short they were both too drunk to write, the man from Alderney couldn't write anyhow so he put a cross on the agreement which Captain Addis witnessed. Anyhow they came back to England with our cattle and West had to make arrangements for his to be kept by a Guernsey breeder at Southampton where they were unloaded, and he kept them for about a year before selling them and lost a lot of money. He learned the hard way. The hotel was run by a mother and her charming daughter Maureen. There was a very peppery old Colonel staying there who used to always grumble about everything. One evening he started shouting about where's my coffee and Maureen brought it and chucked the whole lot in his face and said "Here's your bloody coffee". It was a coincidence because Maureen had quite a nice voice and during the war all the Alderney people were evacuated except for one or two men to look after the remaining cattle during the German occupation. I was walking in Godalming High Street and was outside Palmers the music shop when I heard a beautiful voice singing in the shop. I went in and it was Maureen. I said, "Good God what are you doing here?" and she told me that her mother and her had both taken a housekeepers job at Thursley when they came to England. I went and saw them several times, it is a very small world. When we were in Alderney spirits were so cheap, brandy, whisky or gin were sold for sixpence. The landlord would fill our glass and just say "say when".

The trouble buying calves at 6 to 10 weeks old was that one had to wait for about 18 months to 2 year before they produced milk. I did have one of my Guernsey cows who produced three calves before she was 4 years old and produced over 2,000 gallons of milk. The cows name was Jennifer of the Valinguet. It was unfortunate that when we had our first tuberculin test that many failed and had to be sold. I was one of the first in Surrey, and Mrs Caddey who had a Jersey herd, to own a tubercular-free herd. I felt it essential owing to the fact that I was retailing the milk. There were no tests in Guernsey until a later date. Later we could buy them and bring them into our own herds with a certificate. I know that when I had the trouble it was a bitter blow as it was one thing we had to either do or not and face up to the consequences. The decision to go for a tubercular-free herd was the right one. I started retailing in a serious manner in November 1928 when I opened a shop in Godalming High Street at the same time. This gave me excellent publicity especially as I won the clean milk competition for Surrey for that year. The shop was opened by Mrs Barns who worked for me all the time until the shop was sold and when I write this in 1984 she is still alive. At this time, my competitors, Lympos and Smee had installed a wonderful machine – centrifugal cleaner. They stated it removed puss, blood, hair and manure from the milk before it was sold to

the public. This was the most wonderful help to me. By advertising in my shop window my clean milk certificate, tuberculosis certificate, vet's certificate stating that our milk had never contained any of the things that Lymposs and Smee's machine removed. I went round canvassing their customers and asked them if they would really drink milk if they knew that stuff like hairs and manure had been removed from it. They were so disgusted and surprised that I got customers by the hundred. This helped me build up my milk business much quicker than I ever expected. It really did Lymposs and Smee so much harm in the end they were doing everything to try and retain their customers by giving away tea sets and God knows what to attract custom. I think the fact that the name Stovold was so well known in the district people came over naturally especially as many of them used to come to Eashing and see the actual cows and the cleanliness we adopted. We used to bottle by hand but in the end bought a small bottle filler named a "Princess" at the dairy show. This is possibly all in my chapter on the dairy business so I will leave it at that. It is interesting that we used quart, one and a half pint bottles as well as the pintas used now.

I well remember the thrill we had at the shop by looking at the till roll every Saturday night and really judging it by its length as much as the figures. That Christmas in 1928 it seemed to stretch the length of the high street. We had some good Christmases with Lyons cakes and demonstrations and what have you, we really had a tip top dairy shop. Later on these gradually went out.

## 8A. THE EASHING HERD OF GUERNSEYS

From 1926 I had a very nondescript herd of cows. I had various breeds at Eashing and I had a Shorthorn herd of 40 at Hurtmore. I realised if I produced too much Guernsey milk it would be unsaleable because of the price but it was so necessary to have a good coloured milk like Guernsey to mix with ordinary milk to sell to the public. I don't think people realise that although Jersey milk is much richer in butter fat it does not have the lovely colour. I made up my mind to really go for Guernseys with the following ends in view.

1. All my cattle would be bred from imported Guernsey stock
2. That I became one of the first herds to be tuberculin tested as we were selling raw milk to the public.
3. That I would build up one of the finest show herds in the country
4. Not to purchase a female animal if at all possible.

It was necessary to buy bulls to get the outcross from the farm. In the end at great expense I think I achieved all my objectives.

The first entry I had in the English Guernsey Herd Book was in 1933. This was an animal I purchased in 1932. I only had 6 cows and a bull registered and only one was from Guernsey. By the 1937 Herd Book, and these must have been animals that I purchased in 1935 or 36, I had 2 good Guernsey bulls, Tips Majestic of Meadow View bred by Jack Carrington and Valentine the Second of Le Negoits bred by Mr Browning who were the best breeders on the island. In addition to this I had 46 imported animals from Guernsey and Alderney so I had got the foundation of an excellent herd. It was after this when disaster struck because knowing I was going in for tuberculin testing I did this straight away. This reduced my herd to 21 imported animals although the two bulls were clear. Anyhow I stuck to my guns, and did not venture or decide to adopt another policy. Eventually Mrs Caddey with her Jersey herd from Egham and my herd were the first two to become tuberculin tested in this part of the country. Luckily by this time I had animals in the herd, bred from the first lot of imported cattle I bought so I did have the nucleus of the herd. In the 1971 Herd Book I had 177 females besides 6 or 7 bulls. By this date one had selected lines of breeding. I will just mention a few of them:

1. The Eashing Beauties bred to 37
2. Eashing Fays to 48
3. Eashing Flossies to 22
4. Eashing Jessies to 215
5. Eashing Lad Sheilas to 46
6. Eashing Millies Princess to 58

and many others. I had decided to show my cattle as this was the best way of insuring publicity, especially as my motto was that it was cheaper to breed for milk than to feed for milk. There was little opportunity of showing cattle until after the war. I bought a horse box from Vic Oliver the actor. I had an excellent driver by the name of Walter Ledger who came from Mr Whnmaylin where he was stud groom. He left there because he wanted to come to a farm where he could do war service as well as look after horses. He was here for many years and was so trustworthy that one could send him off anywhere with a load of cattle and you knew he would get there and home safely. I really started in 1947 and I have listed the shows as they are rather interesting being from different parts of the country. At all these shows I won prizes and several championships. This I kept doing all through the years I had Guernseys, which led to the export of bulls and females to Australia, South Africa, Kenya, Colombo etc. I suppose my biggest triumph was to go to my first show at the Royal. I missed the first 2 but went to Shrewsbury in 1949. Here I had a most successful day – I had a first prize with Lads Sheila, who also won the reserve championship female

and gained the highest number of points on inspection and milking trials. My three entries won the Thornton Cup for the best group which was most exciting.

As Shrewsbury was so far away I decided to travel by plane. A friend of mine, Jimmy Greenside, hired one from somewhere and we went off in good spirits from Dunsfold Aerodrome. We took two passengers, Major Alan Leak and Gordon Sinclair, a very good farmer from Clandon. Jimmy had been a ferry pilot during the war. At Dunsfold there were so many things that delayed the flight – one I think was that we didn't have enough string to tie on the wings – we arrived late on Shrewsbury when the judging was actually over. This was a great disappointment to me as I would have loved to have seen my cattle win at their first Royal – a show where I have won many times since. On the way back Jimmy told us that he wanted to call in at an aerodrome to make arrangements to collect a plane for a friend of his. He said anyhow we can have a drink which we had had plenty of already. When we got over Birmingham the engine seized up because he hadn't put any oil in showing how casual everything was. I consider that Alan Cobham's Circus after the First World War, where anyone could fly for ten shillings and loop the loop for a pound was better value!! As I was sitting in the front with him, he said don't tell the other two that we are going to make a crash landing or else we will cause a panic. As a farmer you should be able to tell me where to land. It went very quickly through my head what might happen – I knew that we could not land in standing corn or else we should go "arse over tip". I selected a field which I thought would be safe because the grass must have been cut once. After knocking through two hedges we actually landed on a disused aerodrome. A man rushed over and said you can't land here this is private property whereupon Alan who was always very aggressive started taking off his coat to knock the man down, saying we have already landed you B.F. We asked if there was a house nearby so we could phone. The man told us about one at the end of the air field. It was now beginning to get a bit dark so we went to this house. A very pretty lady in a negligee opened the door about 2 inches on a chain. When Alan saw her he said, "Good God what the hell are you doing here?", because it happened to be an ex-girlfriend of his. Anyhow she was apparently living there with her boyfriend. We went into the house and drank a bottle of whisky and a bottle of gin whilst phoning. We eventually contacted someone about the plane and getting it off the field to see to it the following morning. The question then came about getting home. Alan, who was living at Heath Farm, Godalming, a farm which I farmed during the war, rang up his wife and asked her to come and meet us at Reading which was about halfway between the two places. We got a taxi after some difficulty as it was quite a long way – about 30 or 40 miles. Anyhow we met her outside the railway station, arriving home about one or two o'clock in the morning. It is funny how big a part planes played in my visits to Guernsey....

## 9. HORSES, HORSES AND MORE HORSES

I consider myself fortunate enough to have grown up in an age when horses were the chief and sometimes only means of motivation in agriculture, the army and public transport, etc.

Before I could walk I often rode in front of father. At the age of six I had my first Welsh pony, aptly called "Taffy". Every hour of daylight we spent riding or in the tack room. During school holidays we travelled many miles with other pony enthusiasts. Hours were enjoyed with my lifelong friend, Alan Tice, either he would ride to Lydling on his black pony, or I rode to Runfold House, Farnham, where he lived. Three years older than I he was a farm pupil with father in 1916/17. He joined the 11<sup>th</sup> Hussars (the Cherrypickers) at the latter end of the war and saw service in Egypt. Although he had to sign up for seven years, in a cavalry regiment, he told me he would rather ride for seven years than walk for two in the infantry. After leaving the army he made a name as a farmer and hop grower. He devoted much of his life to public work for Farnham. For many years on the Surrey County Council, he was awarded the OBE for his public work. Unfortunately he died in 1975, a great loss to the community.

We did a great deal of driving. All types of horses and ponies to various vehicles, both as singles and pairs. In the holidays we drove the farm horses. When putting on the harness I had to stand in the manger to put on the collar and bridle as the horses were sixteen or seventeen hands high, as I could not reach from the ground. We often got up at 5.00 a.m. to help the carters in the stables and then had lunch in the fields with them whilst the horses had nosebags. At ten, I was trusted with a pair of horses either harrowing or rolling and felt proud when father let me drive a three horse team. It was a thrill to drive a team to a wagon taking potatoes to Aldershot, the home of the British Army. It was a day's work for which the carters were given 6d beer money, the distance being about eight miles each way.

What a sight it was to see three or more teams of well-groomed horses, manes plaited and brasses shining, in convoy on the Hogs Back, which was reached by Puttenham Hill. The teams needed the help of a trace horse as it was so steep. A trace horse was put at the front of the pair hitched to the wagon. From an early age I often took the trace horse. As blacksmith Heath was at Puttenham, a horse which needed showing was the "trace horse of the day" so the two jobs were combined. How we loved to blow the forge and watch the smith so skilfully fit a hot shoe to the hoof. The shoes were made at the smithy. He kept a supply for each horse which was shod there regularly. Many horses have been ruined, in latter years, by unskilled blacksmiths cutting away the foot to fit a mass-produced shoe. Heath also made our farm carts as he was an excellent wheelwright.

I enjoyed hunting during Christmas and Easter holidays, often with a pack of harriers of which Mr Hutchinson was the last master. At six I was taken hunting on a leading rein by Miss Parsons, a great character, who lived in a large house in the middle of Godalming High Street. She used a horse and trap after motor cars became popular. After leaving school I worked on father's farm, for a short time. I broke in a few horses and hunted when I could leave work. I often travelled by train from Godalming, Farncombe or Milford Station, when meets were too far for hacking, although hacking 15 miles to a meet was easy. For £1 one could get a horse box and carriage for a return journey for quite a distance. Most trains could pick up a box from the station siding. These were closed as lines became electrified as boxes could not be attached. I was the last to unload a horse at Godalming on to the platform as the siding had been closed!

I usually hunted with the Chiddingfold as the meets were within hacking distance and it was easier to qualify my point-to-pointers. It was a great honour when the Master, Richard Barlow's father, asked me to wear the Hunt Button. I have served for many years on their Hunt Committee. Richard first became Joint master with his father in 1936 and is still Master of the Chiddingfold, Leconfield and Cowdray Hunt. Very few have served a longer term. On one occasion at a point-to-

point in Knowle park I was called before the judge, Lord Winterton, after winning the member's race, for riding across the second horse ridden by George Coles. I explained that I had to wait to give him a lead over the last fence which his horse refused. This was accepted. George was agent for Sir John Leigh who had so many good point-to-pointers including Goldfish which won many races ridden by Ryan Price, the now famous trainer.

Sometimes I hunted with the Hampshire Hunt during the time when that well-known Master, George Evans, was either sole or Joint Master over a long period 1909-1939. He was well known for expressing himself, especially to those who headed a fox. It is said that on one occasion two lady followers, on seeing him galloping towards them, forestalled his wrath by saying, "neither of us bitches headed you b..... fox."

Another pack I hunted with was the Lord Leconfield (formed in 1773) before their amalgamation with the Chiddingfold in 1942, hunting over the vast estate covering a great area of Sussex, Petworth House was the centre of activities. The third Baron Leconfield was Master from 1901-1942. He used to get very angry, if upset, and on several occasions took hounds home. As a non-subscription hunt it did not worry him if he upset his followers. After his death Lady Leconfield hunted on several occasions with my hounds, the Chiddingfold Farmers.

In the 1960's one of my oldest foot followers told me he was living on the Leconfield Estate and followed hounds whenever possible. At the age of seven he hollowed away a fox. Lord Leconfield came galloping down a ride threatening to give him a whipping. On raising his crop the thong got caught in a tree and became detached, then Lord Leconfield galloped on. The boy returned in the evening and retrieved the thong which he presented to me on his eighteenth birthday and I still have it. The year was about 1885 so it was the late Lord Leconfield's father who was then Master.

Another pack within hacking distance was the Aldershot Command Drag Hounds, run by the military. As a cavalry brigade was stationed at Aldershot, they were a natural schooling for many future MFH's. They hunted the fox once or twice a week and a drag line as often as possible. The two packs were in the same kennels, the "villains" being used on the drag. Actually it was useful having a villain or two during hunting days as if there were no foxes they would hunt anything that would run!

Major C.S.H. (Mousie) Townsend MRCVS was Master in 1926-27 and I sometimes helped as whipper-in. At the time I was looking for a more suitable pointer-to-pointer than the hunter I used to race. In 1927 his regiment, the 10<sup>th</sup> Hussars, were casting their blood horses. He selected a seven year old bay mare that he thought would be suitable. I went to see General Bright, who was in charge of remounts who said she would be sold on breeding terms and that the price was £10. I explained that I was a farmer and not a millionaire and offered £5. We compromised at the exorbitant figure of £7 10s! I called her Lady Luck and what a good mare she proved to be, winning many point-to-points. At the Chiddingfold Hunt Meeting at Knowle, Cranleigh, in 1931, Ryan Price was to ride her in the adjacent hunts race. There were about twenty entries. He had weighed out and was ready to mount when someone said they would object if he won. I cannot remember why, neither can Ryan, whom I asked about the incident. The stewards delayed the race for five minutes for me to find another jockey. A Peter Hotham volunteered and I accepted. He borrowed as much as he could from Ryan and weighed out. Two winning jockeys of previous races offered too late. Peter had not walked the course and asked for instructions. I said follow your leader and have a good ride as I thought there would be little chance of a win. He won by about ten lengths!

What a great success Ryan has made of his career, not only as a point-to-point rider but as a trainer both over the sticks and on the flat. My greatest thrill was when I beat him in a V.C race at the Wisborough Green annual show which we thought was for the "Price" benefit! His brother and sisters were all excellent riders.

Lady Luck eventually split her pastern when unwillingly taking a practise jump at Witley Park. I say unwillingly as she was difficult to ride and resented the officer from the Scots Greys who was riding her at the time. General Bright used to visit me annually to see the foal which never materialised! One day he said “Stovold, has this mare ever seen the stallion?” I promptly said “Yes sir”, whereupon he said “Over the gate”, to which I honestly replied, “yes”, as a premium stallion was stabled one night a week at Eashing as it travelled the county. I was offered a high figure for her. On enquiring my position I was told I could sell but would have to pay the difference between the purchase and selling price to the government! Capital gains tax.

I have had many good horses but she was my favourite. I rode her for years round the farm several times a day and she would stand without being tied up and wait with our faithful Airdale “jockeyette” ready for the next trip.

I had great fun with the Aldershot drag and used to help whip-in. They hunted anything with a scent! The drag hunt dinners for farmers and keepers, held at the officers club, Aldershot, were great occasions. One of the first speeches made was a reply to the toast to the farmers proposed by Major Bob Field-Marsham, the master. After leaving the army he became master of the Bicester in 1936-37. The annual dinner was attended by many officers in mess kit, one sitting next to each farmer. Much liquor was consumed, at least three glasses per person kept topped up. At the end of the evening many officers and guests could certainly not have driven home with the breathalyzer tests, as they are today.

One particular lesson I learnt at an early age was when I offered a lady who had a hunting lodge in the Shires, a good five year old for two hundred guineas which I thought a fair price. She never troubled to look at it. Her groom told me afterwards that I did not ask enough. After a few weeks I offered a horse I thought would suit and the price would be £600. The horse inspected and bought. It was the same animal! Many people only think in terms of money, not in quality; a form of snobbishness, like the man who was such a snob he would not ride in the same car as his chauffeur.

I often said I would like to be an MFH. Father said I should not aspire to such impossible heights. Like Lord Montgomery, I considered nothing impossible but that it might take longer to achieve. This I did and was a master for twenty years. Father, who died in 1953, in his eightieth year, was pleased I achieved my ambition.

During my seventy years of owning ponies, cobs, hunters, point-to-pointers, milk ponies and cart horse, I have experienced the good, bad and the indifferent. During this time, however, I have had very many good horses. After my first pony, Taffy, I progressed upwards in size as I got older. There was a period just after I left school when I named various horses after musical comedies. One comes to mind and that is “Katz the Dancer” on which I used to do a bit of “flapping”, that is racing on the flat. There was an annual meeting at Chertsey which I won on two occasions. “Flapping” was very common in the south of England, was and is still a great sport in the north, where trotting races are also very popular. Ginger McCaine, trainer of “Red Rum” talks about them in his book. They reminded me of some of the greyhound tracks which sprang up round the country when greyhound racing became popular. Some were very dubious and many devices were used to hinder greyhounds, such as putting chewing gum between toes, tying lightly in the traps, overfeeding and doping, etc. The chief reason for these tracks was betting. Many were run in fields with a hare being towed by a man sitting on a bicycle and pedalling to wind in the two ropes attached at the rear wheel.

The next progression was a hunter/point-to-pointer which I looked after as I was still living at Lydling. This had to be done early in the morning or evening as between times I had to work b..... hard. About this time many army horses were being cast from cavalry regiments and sold at various markets in the south of England. I bought several but fifty per cent were so accustomed to

being troop horses they were “nappy” and would not go on their own. I remember backing a “nappy” horse about half a mile down a lane by holding the bridle each side and backing and backing. I sweated and swore, so did the horse, but it cured him for ever of a very bad habit! In later years, when I had a groom, if I thought a horse was this way inclined, I would send him with messages to various parts of the district.

In the early twenties, we used to break in a number of colts, both carthorses and hunters. This entailed hours of long rain driving. In the end one could practically ride a horse with legs and a bit of string in its mouth. I sold several of these as polo ponies at good prices. An odd coloured horse I sold to the cavalry as a drum horse.

I started riding my own point-to-pointers but suffered from a back injury which gave me constant trouble. I put this down to showing off when I worked on the farm for father after leaving school. I thought it clever to hold 56lb weights over my head and lift a sack of wheat weighing 2¼ cwt. Often I would load tons of potatoes, in hundredweight bags, on my own!

After I started farming on my own in 1925, I had many cart horses. There was one incident well worth mentioning. There was a man in London who advertised heavy dray horses, believed to be in foal, in farming papers. I bought a couple and they were two of the biggest bastards you could imagine. They used to run away, rear up, nap and had every other fault. I was not the only farmer caught out in this way. There was some adverse publicity about it in the papers, at that time and I believe prosecution followed for false information given in the advertisement.

Most of the horses were Shires which had too much feather for our ground, so I went in for Suffolk mares from which I bred a number of good foals. Then came the era of milk ponies when I started my milk business in 1928. We had about ten or a dozen which caused all kinds of problems, the chief one being running away and smashing milk floats. It was interesting selecting suitable ponies. At one time I tried to have all piebalds. I bought ponies from Percy Podger of Binscombe, Smith of Normandy and the Richards Brothers on the Peasmarsch. Their father used to be called “Cock” Richards, from whom we used to buy expensive petrol during war time 1914-1918. He had a nice house on the Peasmarsch and one wonders how he got it in the middle of common land! It was the old dodge of starting with a caravan and encroaching on the land each year. “Squatter’s Rights” were claimed and he was allowed to build a house and buildings. He also had a knackers yard at the premises. I remember when dead horses and cows were winched on to a two-wheeled vehicle drawn by a horse. Many owners wanted animals put down on their own premises as, when sent to the knackers yard for slaughter, many went in at the front and out at the back at a good price.

I had a lame mare that a vet said could not be cured. Just over a year after sending her for slaughter I received a telephone call from a man asking if I could let him know her breeding as she had won several races!

We were often changing milk ponies on a part-exchange basis, a good thing from the horse dealer’s point of view as he was improving his deal on the exchange. One year I found we were one pony short. No one would admit they owed for it so I used a method my grandfather told me about. The three dealers were sent a bill for two ponies. Two rang up immediately and said they did not owe anything. The third rang up to say I had made a mistake as he only owed me for one – I had found the missing pony! Having men to look after ponies enabled me to keep a couple of hunters as well. As cart horses were replaced by tractors and the milk ponies by motors, I had a groom to look after two hunters and a point-to-pointer and a pony each for Janet and John.

I had several good grooms but the best of all was Walt Ledger. He came to me during the war and from Mr and Mrs Wynmalen who ran an Arab stub farm at Twyford, Berks. He changed jobs because he wanted to do farm work as his war effort. He had a cast in one eye which prevented him from doing war service. He was good to the children and they had great fun after the war, going to



gymkhanas and other horse events. He would take them in the horse box and one was certain he would look after them well. He was with me many years until he retired and took up a caretaking job in a bank.

I bought a horse box from the late Tom Walls whose son rode my point-to-pointer on one or two occasions. The box was useful during winter as I often took the point-to-pointers down to Wittering sands for a gallop during frosty weather. One horse I remember especially was Tank Buster, for which I had great hopes of running not only at Cheltenham but in the National. He was bought from Morgan Blair who was one of the greatest characters one could imagine. This horse won a few point-to-points but never reached the heights I had hoped for. I put this down to a superstition. My lucky number is thirteen. Morgan changed its name to Tank Buster because the registered name had thirteen letters in it! Morgan originally worked for the Stephens Ink man at Coverwood, Ewhurst, "Inky" as he was called. Towards the end of his days Inky was a sick man and was nursed by a very charming girl, Mary Abbott. Incidentally, I was at Cranleigh with her brother. When Inky died Mary married Morgan. She was a brave girl because anyone who could put up with him had to be very tolerant. Inky left money to Morgan but, unfortunately, his fortune was in America and the money could not come to England but by various ways, I suppose, he got some back to this country as he settled down in Ewhurst where he had several horses. Many were broken down which vets had given up as hopeless. He was exceptionally clever in getting them right. The vet said he probably killed as many as he saved but I had pleasure in pointing out the ones he had saved, they had given upon. We used to enjoy reminiscing as Morgan was a very amusing character. I can remember his stock pot which was a copper. From this came the most delicious soup one could imagine as long as one did not smell it being matured! It was said that anything that died automatically went in the pot!

I bought a number of horses from the late Tommy Grantham of West Grinstead, another great character in the horse world. I often went to Ireland with him to various horse fairs, Limerick, Kildare, Tipperary, etc. Being an Irishman he could deal much better with owners than an Englishman. He never made an exorbitant profit and I often had horses at the same price as he paid in Ireland. He would buy anything up to twenty horses from various fairs. Many masters used to commission him to buy their hunt horses. In latter years he had a good clientele of show jumpers, who used to arrive at his premises as soon as he took the horses of rail. Anything with a "pop" in it fetched good money. I often met Peter Robeson and his father there and the Carter brothers who did so much for.....*[text missing at bottom of page]* the Queen Mother for several seasons, took over his business after his father died. He rode several times in the Grand National in the early fifties.

After a hunting fall I had a lot of back trouble. I should imagine I have spent as much time and been to as many osteopaths as anyone. I was often pushed in a bath chair from a train at Waterloo to the taxi rank. After treatment I would run and catch a return train! In latter years I went to a chiropractor who kept me hunting for the last fifteen years without any trouble.

The late Frank Gloyn, who did so much for the Chiddingfold Farmers' Branch of the Pony Club, often rode my point-to-point horses. One little gelding I remember extremely well was called Bold Robin. Another that did exceptionally well was a grey gelding "Haston Lad". I was first impressed by this horse when I went to a Surrey Union Hunt point-to-point and he ran both in the members' and adjacents hunts' races. I thought a horse that could run twice in one day must be darned good and he proved me right. Haston Lad won many races and the longer they were the better it suited him, he was his best at about four miles. We did have the thrill of hearing his name at every race in which he was running. Being grey he was conspicuous. He led the field for the greater part of the race but did not have the speed for a close finish. I sold him eventually to a friend, Bob Froome, in Guernsey and he won a few races on him. It was the late Geoff Royle who recommended me to buy him. He was owned by Jack O'Donoghue of the Priory Stables, Reigate, who trained Nickel Coin, the famous small mare that won the Grand National for Geoff in 1951.

In 1951 when Geoff and son Frank arrived at Aintree, Geoff's son wanted his father to withdraw, having seen the size of the fences. Geoff told Bullock, the jockey, the mare had so much sense that he should not interfere with her jumping – often a rider, seeing a fallen horse, would try to ride for a miss which might conflict with the horse's eyes and brain, having already made up its mind to avoid the fallen horse. Conflicting ideas at the crucial moment often cause a fall. I have seen a film of the National. Over one particular jump it is noticeable that Bullock was not guiding Nickel Coin and you can see the mare's obvious change of direction in mid air to avoid a falling horse! This should be shown to Pony Clubs as it gives an idea of a horse's common sense.

I went to the late Tattersalls in Knightsbridge on many occasions where a variety of horses were sold. It was a clearing house for all the "rogues" in the country. One had to read very much between the lines with any warranty given. One horse I bought for point-to-pointing had a "B" in its bonnet as far as barbed wire was concerned. It gave me a bad fall at Cranleigh when I was galloping straight towards an open gate and the horse served just before the gap and tried to jump five strands of barbed wire. He caught the top strand and went head over heels. He also tried to jump my groom over barbed wire when exercising on the farm, so I got rid of him. I cannot remember whether I .....[text missing at bottom of page]

Another great horse was a heavyweight chestnut called Limerick which I bought on a trip to Ireland with Tommy Grantham. A wonderful horse which gave me years of good hunting. I once lent him to the late Earl of Winterton when hunting with my hounds. Unfortunately his Lordship could not see very well and tripped over a tree trunk and had a bad fall which is mentioned in his book "On the Way to Greatness". After several years I decided to sell him as he was really too heavy for me. I offered him to Maurice Passmore, one of the largest farmers in Oxfordshire. Incidentally, his brother, Gilbert, was NFU Secretary from 1934 to 1961. When he retired I was made Chairman for the second time, to select his successor. To cut a long story short, when Maurice came to try the horse it was brought out of the stable quite lame, although he was perfectly alright the day before! Naturally Maurice would not entertain buying him. On the following day the horse was as sound as a bell. I know my groom, Walt Ledger, was so fond of the horse he did not want to part with him, neither did I, really. Whether this was a case of fate or "nobbling" I shall never know.

I had several Limerick's during my lifetime, in fact, my last hunter was so named. A bay gelding, a typical MFH's horse. He was perfect and liked to be up front with hounds and would do everything asked of him, jump gates, go through bogs, and never turned a hair. Although it is reputed that people selling horses are not always a hundred percent genuine in their description, on this occasion something transpired which is interesting. I was looking for a horse and found the following advertised in "Horse and Hound": "Middleweight Hunter, Limerick. Bay Gelding, 15 hands 3 in, 8 yrs. Up to 13 stone 7lbs. Hunted with Heythrop. Excellent Jumper. The most perfect manners. Snaffle mouth. Quiet traffic, clip, box, shoe. Very suitable for anyone elderly or nervous. £300. Apply Colonel Walford, Old House, Wolverton, Basingstoke, Hants." At this time I was suffering from a frozen shoulder which my doctor told me would last for a year. Actually, it took a year and a day from the time I was unable to lift my arm above shoulder level. I tried out the honesty of advertisers and rang up several people who advertised in the same issue. When I told them I was an old man with one arm they made excuses that their horse might be a bit too strong or they did not think theirs was quite suitable. When I rang Colonel Walford, whom I knew, as he lived adjacent to the Royal Counties Show Ground at Kingsclere, I disguised my voice and asked him about Limerick. I asked to try him and he said he would ask his wife to get him in from grass. When I arrived I played the part well having put my arm in a sling. When he saw me he called me something which I will not repeat, but to cut a long story short, I asked for some bales to make it easier to mount. I galloped him round and thought he was genuine and purchased him at the price advertised without asking for any "luck money". I had him for seven years and eventually sold him to a man of 70 in Ditchling, Sussex, who rode him just for pleasure. He told me what fun he had and how keen he was even when 21 years of age.

During Lady Luck's reign we were friendly with a very "horsey" family named "Vallance". There were three boys and a girl, Sylvia, who was friendly with my sister, Marjorie. They both did good work in the girl guides. Sylvia later went as a missionary to India. Her youngest brother, Maurice, used to exercise Lady Luck during his holidays. I let him take her hunting sometimes. On one occasion he was sent home for being in front of both hounds and the master – very unforgivable. I consider I was the only one who could control her whilst she was fit and being qualified. Maurice went to Kenya and did very well at the Nairobi race track. I met him after a long lapse in Kenya in 1959 and have seen him on subsequent visits. One brother "Ricky" rode Lady Luck in several point-to-points. He made his career in the army and retired as a Lieutenant-Colonel.

I can do no better to end this chapter than to set out the prayer to "The Horse", especially written for the Horse of the Year Show, 1954, by Ronald Duncan. When read so ably by Dorian Williams during the cavalcade at the end of the final performance each year, it brings tears to many eyes as not greater tribute can be paid to our most faithful friend.

### THE HORSE

"Where in this wide world can man find nobility without pride,  
Friendship without envy or beauty without vanity?  
Here, where grace is laced with muscle, and strength by  
Gentleness confined.

Her serves without servility, he has fought without enmity.  
There is nothing so powerful, nothing less violent;  
There is nothing so quick, nothing more patient.

England's past has been borne upon his back.  
All our history is his industry.  
We are his heirs, he our inheritance.  
Ladies and Gentlemen – the Horse! "

Letter to the Editor, 'HORSE & HOUND', published 23.2.79

"Those were the days!"

Sir – in the process of looking up my family history from the 13<sup>th</sup> century, while looking through documents I came across the following, relating to 1492 expenses :-

"Charge of saddle-horses: profleobotimacione, 4d; new saddle, 2s; four pairs of Stiropp ladders, 1s 7d; 6 reyns, 8d; 4 crowps, 11d; 2 cingul, 10d; 1 great coler of Hungary leather, 6d; two headstalls of black leather, 8d; total, £1 8s 10½d."

I wonder if any of your readers could let me know what "profleobotimacione" meant?"

F. Raymond Stovold  
Godalming, Surrey

A telephone call was received later in the day, 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1979, from a woman in the Haywards Heath area to say her vet had informed her that “profleobotimacione” meant bloodletting. She subsequently wrote to Horse & Hound and the following was published 2.3.79:

“profleobotimacione”

Sir – in answer to Mr Stovold’s enquiry (February 23) about the meaning of “profleobotimacione”, I believe that this means that the horse(s) have been bled (see Revised Mediaeval Latin Word List by Latham, pub. 1965).

I should be most interested to learn if readers have any other suggestions.

Ann Corbishley (Miss)  
Haywards Heath, Sussex

A letter was also received from John Hicks, MRCVS, The Gatehouse, Lower Beeding, Horsham, Sussex, dated 25<sup>th</sup> February 1979:

Dear Mr Stovold,

Re your letter in this weeks H&H I suggest the word refers to bleeding – Phlebotomy – “act of bleeding” (fle-bot’o-mi- as per dictionary pronunciation) Pro – presumably for – i.e. a service. The Latin suggests a medical connection. Hence “for phlebotimation” – a treatment more worthy of the farrier’s fee than mere bloodletting. The professions still “blend with science”!

Anyway I thank you for an interesting letter in a page of dreary complaint.

Your sincerely – John Hicks

Reply to Mr Stovold’s letter of 23.2.79 published in the 16<sup>th</sup> March 1979 issue of Horse & Hounds.

“Blood-letting”

Sir – I was interested to read Mr Raymond Stovold’s letter (February 23) about prices of saddlery in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

I think the answer to his question is that the charge of 4d “profleobotimacione” was for bleeding (phlebotomy), a popular remedy of the period for a variety of ailments, of men as well as horses. A farrier would carry an instrument called a fleam, with a number of blades of various sizes, to make the necessary incision.

There are a number of pubs in the country with the name “The Bleeding Horse”, which commemorate the practice.

C.G.D Glass  
Newbury, Berks.

## 10. MASTER OF FOXHOUNDS

“I freely admit that the best of my fun I owe it to Horse and Hound” How true this quotation by Whyte Melville has proved in my case.

“A huntin’ I will go”, and this was evident when I was quite young. I was five or six when I started hunting on a leading rein, controlled by Miss Parsons, a doctor’s daughter and a great character who lived in a large Victorian house in Godalming High Street. During the 1939-45 war she drove everywhere in her pony and trap. I often followed the Guildford and Shere Beagles on my pony, feeling very privileged as everyone else as on foot. From this stage I graduated and hunted with the Chiddingfold Hounds and the Aldershot Drag. I felt honoured when the master of the Chiddingfold, Mr F. J. Barlow, allowed me to wear the hunt button. In 1942, the Chiddingfold amalgamated with the Leconfield and recently the Cowdray joined them. Richard Barlow, who became Joint Master with his father in 1936 is now among the longest serving MFHs.

The 1920’s and 30’s were a lot of fun, going to meets by train from Godalming or Milford stations if they were too far for hacking, i.e. fifteen miles or more. The return fare for horse box and seating compartment was about £1. When electrification came the sidings were closed as horse boxes could not be attached to electric trains. I was the last person to unload at Godalming station. As the sidings had been closed I unloaded on the platform.

I had great fun with the Aldershot drag and used to help whip-in. They hunted anything with a scent! The drag hunt dinners for farmers and keepers, held at the Officers Club, Aldershot, were great occasions. One of the first speeches I made was a reply to the toast to the farmers proposed by Major Bob Field-Marsham, the master. After leaving the army he became master of the Bicester in 1936-37.

I often expressed the wish to have hounds and become master. Father poo-pooed the idea and said it could never happen, this made me all the more determined to succeed. This was in the days when an MFH was very high in the social scale. The opportunity came in 1943 after Charles White, Eric Savage and I met the late Mrs F.J. Barlow and Richard Barlow, joint masters of the Chiddingfold and Leconfield, and put suggestions forward for the formation of a farmer’s pack. They agreed and it was decided the name should be the Chiddingfold Farmer’s Hunt.

A meeting was held on 8<sup>th</sup> November 1943, when a committee was formed comprising Mr T.C. White, as Chairman, Messrs Berwyn Jones, P.N. Fuller, Eric Savage, A. Sparkes and myself, appointed as secretary and treasurer. In 1947, Mr and Mrs Ivan Roberts were appointed joint secretaries and I became chairman of the committee. They retired to Devon in 1964, when Mr and Mrs Alan Roberts were appointed as secretaries and Mr Baron Holroyd as treasurer.

The Chiddingfold and Leconfield and the Surrey Union offered to loan country. The loan from the Surrey Union included as far south as Bramley and Cranleigh, thence to Ewhurst, over the hills to Holmbury St. Mary and to Abinger and East Horsley, the northern boundary was the Effingham-Guildford railway. The loan from the Chiddingfold and Leconfield on the western boundary adjoined the Hampshire Hunt approximately from Runfold, near Farnham to Elstead and Tilford, Frensham, Thursley, Witley, Hambledon, Cranleigh and Ellens Green. In 1949 an extension was made by opening a piece of country north east of Guildford, including Byfleet, Ripley, Ockham, Cobham, etc. A very difficult addition which had not been hunted for years.

It was a difficult country as the main London to Portsmouth electrified railway ran through the centre. Also on the north side were the Guildford-Aldershot and Woking-Basingstoke lines and on the south the Guildford-Dorking line. In addition there were further problems, the main A3 London-Portsmouth road, the Hogs Back on the Guildford to Farnham road and the Guildford to Horsham road on the south. These were not too bad from 1943 to the mid-fifties as petrol was

rationed and lorries were limited to 20 miles per hour. Later, when petrol was more plentiful and the 20 mile speed limit on lorries relaxed, hunting near these roads became impossible, especially the Hogs Back which was made into a dual carriageway. In spite of this we had twenty-six years of most enjoyable hunting, although towards the end, the number of mounted followers was too great for this type of country, often 150 on a Saturday and 70-80 on a Wednesday.

Captain Berwyn Jones, local veterinary surgeon, agreed to act as amateur huntsman and kennel hounds at his premises in Wonersh. The first meet was at Eashing Farm on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1943, during which the Whipper-In broke his leg. An unfortunate start. For the next four years the hunt was managed by a committee. Charles White and the late Archie Sparkes were appointed joint masters for the season 1946/47 and remained in office until 1950, when Charles resigned. I joined Archie for the season 1950/51, after which he resigned. Unfortunately he died later of a heart attack riding home from a meet in the Cranleigh district. From the season 1950/51 I was in sole command and remained so until the hunt ceased in 1969 through lack of suitable country.

During the season 1950/51 a hunt club was formed and 170 members were enrolled. The club administered the affairs of the hunt in respect of the kennels which had been purchased. Three trustees were appointed: Mr F.R Stovold (master), Mr P.N. Fuller and Mr John St. G. Syms, who administered the fund until the cessation of the hunt in 1969. After this date they continued with some members of the Hunt Committee until the final distribution of funds, in 1979. The capital was distributed with a wish that recipients should invest the money and use the interest only. The recipients were as follows:

West Horsley Riding for the Disabled Branch	£3,920
Cranleigh Branch of the Riding for the Disabled	£3,920
Chiddingfold Farmers Branch of the Pony Club	£5,000
Surrey Union Hunt Kennel Fund	£1,380
Surrey County Agricultural Society	£ 500
	£14,720

During the 1950's a Footsloggers Club was also formed from our very large following of ardent supporters. We were possibly the first to form this type of club although many re in existence today. They were very generous in their support and annual donations, etc. In July 1957 they presented a horse for my huntsman, Bob Buswell, which carried him for many years without a fall. The horse was aptly named "Slogger", and although only about 14.2 h.h. he had his heart in the right place and would jump well including gates and wire. In 1965 the Club gave another horse named "Sportsman". Both of the horses were presented to the master at the very popular and well attended annual terrier show held at either Eashing or the Kennels.

#### Point-to-Points

We were very keen to have a point-to-point as a money raiser. In 1947 I was made secretary to run one at Horsley on a farm rented by the late Bertie Holland. This was not a very good start as the ground was so wet on the day that it was postponed. We were so keen that another date was allocated to us, rather than taking the insurance money which with hindsight we should have done. The second date was nearly as bad with the result being a loss of £800. For the next two years we held a joint meeting with neighbouring hunts at Tweseldown. This was not very profitable as any profits had to be shared. During this time we spent many hours trying to find a suitable site. Mr Fred Baker agreed to let us have a meeting on his land in Peper Harow Park. As it was so near our farm, John and I were able, over the next 19 years to supply tractors and staff to help with the preparations. During this time I was responsible for running the point-to-point which remained on

this site, by permission of Messrs Fred and Colin Baker, his son, until the hunt was established. The Surrey Union now uses this course.

The point-to-point was enjoyed by thousands of people. Although not a good course for spectators it was a very social occasion. It was held on the fourth Saturday in April when the weather was fairly good, although on one occasion we had a glorious day for racing, after which every tent was flattened by snow on the Sunday. This was in 19?? When many telephones were out of order for weeks as the weight of the frozen snow broke the overhead lines. After the point-to-point in 1952 Brian Johnston, the well-known broadcaster and commentator, did the BBC programme "In Town Tonight" from the course, much to everyone's delight. Bob Buswell gave calls on his hunting horn and others were interviewed, including Gully-Gully, the well known racing tipster who burnt £1 notes to attract a crowd. Incidentally, this was the day our son, John, became engaged to Hazel Crunden. Brian came to their engagement party that evening.

During the 27 years the hunt was in existence it was very popular with a large following, including landowners and farmers over whose ground we hunted. Being a farmer, I studied all aspects of the situation such as cows calving, ewes lamming, shooting etc., and contacted those over whose land we hunted, before fixing meets. Many hunts now have farmers as masters, an ideal arrangement.

Buswell was one of the best huntsmen for our difficult type of country and an excellent horseman. His hound control was superb, witnessed at many shows including the Royal Richmond, Royal Windsor, Royal Counties, Brighton, Ascot, Hickstead, Surrey County and others. Leaving hounds at one end of the arena, he and his whipper-in would ride to the other end. Hounds would not move until he blew his horn on which he excelled. On one appearance at the Royal Richmond Horse Show, at which Her Majesty the Queen was present, the hunt terrier was slipped into the ring from the public stand. The sight of this small animal running and yapping with hounds caused shrieks of laughter. The commentator, either Peter Dimmock or Dorian Williams, made much of the intruder. It was not until hounds were leaving the ring the public were told it was the hunt terrier. It was at one of these Richmond appearances we allowed children into the ring to make a fuss of hounds. We were one of the first to do so when the Earl of Westmorland was president. This is now normal practice.

We took part in several films including Walt Disney's "The Horsemasters" in 1960, a full length film and an expensive production. We provided the hunting and racing personnel. The cast included Tommy Kirk and Annette Funicello, an American actress, who were in the leading roles. Among others was Millicent Martin who later made her name in David Frost's "That Was The Week That Was", in which I had great pleasure in appearing with other farmers who faced up to the questioning of Bernard Levin who met his match for the first time! Others in the film were Janet Monro, Tony Britton, John Fraser, Jean Marsh, who was so successful in "Upstairs Downstairs", and Donald Pleasance. It was a pleasure to meet them.

Major George Boon, who had just left the Royal Corps of Transport, allowed the film to be made on his farm at Thursley. He bought about a dozen horses for the film, plus new saddles and bridles. They were sold after the filming and a number of people had some good bargains. Shepperton Studios and Burnham Beeches were also locations for this colourful film. We arranged a meet of hounds at the Three Horseshoes, Thursley. We could not have a stirrup cup as drinking was not allowed in any Disney film. Although very few of the cast could ride they gradually became interested. At the meet they all appeared mounted. When we did the hunting scene a drag line was laid to get hounds to give tongue. I told the director that the film could only be shot once owing to aniseed getting on the horses' hooves. He insisted on a re-run when hounds went all over the place in pursuit of the aniseed that had been brought back by the horses to the start. Every jump taken in the hunting and racing scenes was flood-lit, so only one or two could be taken a day as lights and cables had to be re-set. I could not understand this as some of the shots were in brilliant sunlight.

The reason being that as the scenes would only run for a few minutes, light and cloud would change considerably during the six days' filming.

Other films we took part in were "The Amorous Prawn" and "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang". On 21<sup>st</sup> September, 1953, we paraded hounds at Battersea Park Exhibition during leather week. The show was televised by the BBC from 8.35pm to 9.05pm, the cheers were unbelievable. This was before the "Antis" started to make a nuisance of themselves. After the parade we were one hound short which we found on "Huntsman's Trade Stand" looking up at a dummy dressed in full hunting kit. What an advertisement this could have been for the firm!

We were fortunate in having Christmas Eve meets at Three Barrows Place, Elstead, entertained by the late Rev. Cyril Cresswell MVO, who, incidentally, conducted the marriage of our daughter, Janet, in 1959. He was the Queen's Padre of the Savoy Chapel and both he and his charming wife were very fond of country life. This was an opportunity for them to entertain a wide circle of friends. On one occasion two bishops were present. After one such meet, about 1954, we stopped hunting at approximately 3.30pm as Buswell wanted to do some Christmas shopping. We were hacking home from Crookbury via Cutmill just as frost started to rise. Just before Peper Harow there is a small wood which we had not drawn recently as it seldom held a fox. Buswell asked if he could draw through, which he did. Hounds found straight away and ran like "stink" along the route we had just hacked. The fox made a line over Crooksbury Hill towards Farnham where he eventually went to ground, covering six or seven miles, to make a four mile point. There was only Buswell, the whipper-in, my daughter, Janet and myself. It was one of the fastest hunts I had experienced. By the time Buswell stopped hounds it was 6.30pm. As it was dark and had become quite frosty we had to phone for the box to fetch hounds and two of the horses. The whipper-in rode back to kennels with the two hunt horses. So much for an organised shopping spree. Buswell remarked that at least it saved him money!

In 1944 we held our first Boxing Day meet in Tuns Gate car park, Guildford, with hospitality provided by the Major, Mr Wykeham Price. This became an annual event. Thousands of people used to attend, including the late Paul Getty from Sutton Place, and line the road to the Downs where a few thousand more were waiting. Even on days when hunting was impossible, owing to frost or snow, we made an appearance so as not to disappoint the public. About a hundred mounted followers turned out and on days we could not hunt and pubs who dispensed Christmas cheer to those who remained. It was often about 4.00pm before we rode into kennels at Godalming, all feeling very happy! The Surrey Union now hold their meet at the Civic Hall, Guildford.

#### Dinners and Feasts

Over the years we had an annual dinner for the farmers and landowners over whose land we hunted, plus the MFH's of adjacent packs. It was always a very pleasant evening, the assembly numbering about four hundred. In addition we had an annual "do" for keepers and earth-stoppers at a get-together which included puppy and terrier shows and sometimes clay pigeon shoots. I remember one such event, at the Stoke Hotel, Guildford, the menu for which appears on page ??.

#### Hunt Balls

The annual Hunt Ball, which my secretary and I ran from Eashing, was one of the best money spinners. At the beginning several were held in the speech hall at Cranleigh School or the Civic Hall, Guildford. Neither of these was ideal. Later I obtained permission to use the Officers' Club at Aldershot, attended by over 400 people. It had one of the first sprung dance floors in the country, apparently supported on chains. Unfortunately it was sprung all over and as we had tables round the edge, one had to hand on to everything as the tables bounced when the floor was full. I always tried to break the evening with some entertainment, unknown to the assembled company. On the first occasion, at midnight, I had about 30 Dagenham Girl Pipers march in from the outside the Club. The din of the bagpipes, drums and cheers were very appropriate. They played for about half an



hour whilst the band had a rest. The guests enjoyed eightsome reels, the Gay Gordons and all those dances where bagpipes are appropriate. They came for several years and later were followed by pipes and drums from highland regiments stationed at Firbright. At first we ran from 9.00pm to 2.00am with buffet supper. As people usually had dinner before coming, the floor was empty until about 10.00pm. When it came to finishing everyone badgered for an extension which cost money. Latterly the time was 10.00pm to 4.00pm with breakfast served after midnight. What a breakfast, bacon, eggs, tomatoes, toast, marmalade and coffee! I am sure many had more than one! Soup was served at 4.00am after which people dwindled away. About twenty people came to Eashing for a few drinks at 8.00pm. I hired a small coach take us somewhere for dinner/drinks before going to the Officers' Club. At 4.30pm the procedure was reversed. On one occasion I had to ask people to leave about 7.00am, as the farm men were coming to work. Tom Parker, the well-known farmer and coaching enthusiast, kept the company amused with his tales.

### Puppy Shows

We held many puppy shows during the years both at Eashing and the kennels. We did not find it easy to get puppy walkers in later years. Not only was it expensive but the heavy traffic in our hunt country made it dangerous if the puppies should stray. We had several killed whilst out walking.

### Hunt Saboteurs – “Antis”

I have put this last as I consider it to be the right place. We had many incidents, some of which were an enjoyable challenge. The first occasion we took a man to court was in 1955. The incident occurred just near the Royal Horticultural Society's Gardens at Wisley on the A3. The man was anti-hunting although it was before the hunt saboteurs were formed in 1964. He drove into the centre of the pack crossing the road, although he had a good view of them for about twenty to thirty yards. He was claiming negligence and costs of £22 10s 6d for damage to his motor car. We took the case to court and won and were awarded costs. Summing up, his Honour Judge A.A. Gordon Clark said that the facts showed all reasonable precautions had been taken by those in charge of the hunt. He was satisfied that huntsmen and foxhounds were legitimate users of the highway and there was nothing improper in allowing hounds to go on a road of any sort. Hounds were still under control of the huntsman, Bob Buswell, although he was not near them at the time of the accident. He arrived with me about two minutes later and found a hound “Godfrey” lying in the road. He dismounted and put the hound in the ditch thinking it was dead, and asked a vet to look at him. The hound was stunned, and came round later with no ill effects.

On another occasion when we were hunting in the Wonersh area I saw a boy dragging a piece of sacking over the ground. I challenged him as I thought he was laying an aniseed trail. He picked it up and let me smell it and there was no smell. He told me that a man in Wonersh gave several boys £1 each to lay a trail but one of our followers gave them an extra £1 each for not putting anything on the sacking. Good business! The man in question had a small business where many of his customers were hunt members. When they heard he was an “anti” they stopped trading with him and eventually he was forced to cease trading in the district!

In 1964 we had an incident with the newly formed Hunt Saboteurs Organisation, founded by a Brixham journalist, 21 year old Mr John Prestige, with a 30-40 groups throughout the country, who was promised the support of an American film company in any legal action that was taken. The police took action against one of the saboteurs, Norman Redman of Littlehampton. The meet was at the Windmill, Pitch Hill, Ewhurst. When I arrived I was informed saboteurs were present. I told them I had no objections to peaceful demonstrations but I would not have hounds fed or sprayed with acetone to put them off the scent. I told the huntsman, Bob Buswell, to respect and ignore the demonstration. A police sergeant reiterated what I had said to the saboteurs. In spite of this, redman defied the advice and red meat to hounds. When confronted by the sergeant I understand he used insulting behaviour and was apprehended. Police prosecution followed and he was fined £15 and bound over for two years.

On arriving on Pitch Hill a fox was quickly found and would have gone to ground within minutes. About 20 to 30 misinformed youths and girls were standing on its earth blowing horns and hollering. This resulted in the fox being turned into hounds and killed within minutes. Buswell asked me what he should do and I said the same as usual, take off the mask, brush and pads. These I offered to the saboteurs stating it was they who caused the death of the fox by preventing it going to ground where it would have been safe. Poetic justice!

The last incident occurred in the said 1960's. We were hunting in the Run Common, Cranleigh area. Hounds had just crossed over the hump-backed bridge when a car appeared from the Guildford direction. The driver accelerated and put on his lights and came towards the hounds. Luckily the huntsman just got them off the road. I hollered at the driver which he ignored. I was worried as the followers, including many children, were on the other side of the bridge hidden by the hump. I took his number and reported the incident to the Godalming police and asked if they should prosecute for dangerous driving. About two months later they brought the case to court, having traced the driver to Essex. His aged mother, who was with him during the incident, was in court and gave conflicting evidence. When she went into the witness box she said what a wonderful sight it was to see hounds, more like a Christmas card. She asked her son to stop which she said he did. He came into the box and said that he did not see hounds and that is why he kept driving. He was obviously lying and was heavily fined. The Magistrate summing up, said his eyesight must be tested, as if he was so short-sighted his licence should be withheld. If they were alright, he should see a psychiatrist as he should not drive if he was absent-minded.

In 1968 members of the Hunt Club presented me with an oil painting by Peter Biegel, of the hunt at Eashing, in recognition of my association over the years. This is a most valued possession as I was able to include members who had done so much during that time. It is an excellent painting of hounds and horses in action at Eashing. Besides myself, others depicted are Bob Buswell, Huntsman 1950-64, Francis Moore, Whipper-in 1956-61 and Huntsman 1964-69, Lance Cocker, Field Master, Ivan Roberts, secretary 1946-64, Janet Stovold, Frank Gloyn on "Haston Lad", my point-to-point horse, and Charles White, master 1946-50. It was very sad when I had to call a General Meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> March 1969, to state that the hunt could not continue.

In 1973 I ceased riding to hounds, as I found hunting with other packs, in difficult country became less enjoyable.

After so many years I have come to the conclusion that hunting will go on in spite of the anti-hunting saboteurs. If it does cease in certain areas it will not be the fault of the antis but of hunt followers, who are apt to think that they have a divine right to ignore everyone, including the farmers, and ride roughshod over everyone.

At the beginning of each season and at the Annual Pony Club Meet I impressed followers that they had no right however large their subscription, to ride anywhere other than on roads or bridleways. The crossing of land was by the courtesy of landowners and farmers.

A flame, a tradition of hunting and good sportsmanship kindled in 1943 amid the ruins and tribulations of war, and with early flickerings survived. May the sound of the horn always be hard resounding among our beloved Surrey hills – HIKE HOLLOA! FORRAD AWAY!

## 11. PART-TIME SOLDIERING

I made up my mind at an early age that army life was what I wanted. Being at school during the 1914-18 war, and at an impressionable age, it appeared a very glamorous career. Soldiers were everywhere, banks playing, square bashing, etc.

After leaving school in 1920 I expressed a wish to join the 10<sup>th</sup> Hussars when I was old enough. Father was quite upset, as he had inoculated us with farming right from the beginning. He made it quite clear that he would set me up on the first rung of the farming ladder but would not give me any money to squander in the services, especially in a cavalry regiment which was very expensive on the social side, polo, etc.

As an alternative, I decided to join the Surrey Yeomanry (Queen Mary's Own) which had been re-formed after the 1914-18 war as a cavalry regiment. I put my age on a year or two and took the King's Shilling and joined as a trooper in B Squadron in 1921, just prior to going to camp in Arundel Park. I drew a uniform from the Quartermaster's Stores at Clapham and set off to camp without much training. The fact that I could ride made it easy, in fact, at the end of camp we held a mounted sports day and I carried off four out of the six prizes, much to the consternation of the rest of the squadron, many of whom served with the regiment throughout the war. The late Duke of Norfolk, a school boy at the time, awarded the prizes, a fact he could hardly believe when I told him in later years.

B Squadron did great work in Salonice from 1915-18, which, together with A Squadron has been recounted in a book of the "Surrey Yeomanry 1797-1928".

Life in a cavalry regiment was something to be remembered. We carried a sword on the near-side of the horse and a carbine, i.e. short rifle in a bucket on the right side. Several hundred horses on parade was a great sight. They were on picket lines during camp and when one was on night duty the aroma of horses and horse manure was wonderful. In fact, this was preferable to sleeping in a bell tent with four or five other troopers smelling of beer. Sweaty saddlery was also in the tent where we polished and burnished bits and stirrups. There was no chromium plate in those days.

Horses were supplied in hundred by contractors for use during summer camps and were passed on to different units. The Surrey yeomanry being an August camp had the advantage of partly trained mounts. I selected mine, having a fairly good eye for a horse, hence the prizes won on sports day. Before the war many yeomen took their own horses to camp.

The headquarters of the Surrey yeomanry at 73, Clapham Common had an excellent riding school and maintained about twenty horses which were looked after by regulars. Recruits were taught to ride and stable management, apart from drill. As many of the troopers were Londoners, they had much to learn. It was noticeable at camp how clean the horses were at the front end, against the rear. It was at the 1921 camp we heard we were changing from cavalry into artillery and joining with the Sussex Yeomanry. This was a tremendous step, not one of us knew a solitary thing about a gun.

Our experience and training were, with one stroke of the pen, hurled into the gutter. Could anyone be surprised that the blow to us was simply devastating? We had nothing against the RFA, they had been in action on every front during the war, but theirs was a service about which we knew nothing. In one moment we were put back to pre-war days and worse. For now a major and a sergeant major, each with twenty years' service in the regiment, would have to begin again and know how to load and fire an 18 pounder gun or a 4.5 Howitzer. Every newly joined recruit would know that his battery commander and B.S.M knew just as much about the business and no more than he himself had learned. That exactly, no more and no less, was the position with which we were faced.

An anxious conference was held between the officers and the NCO's. Should we or should we not carry on? If we did not, either the whole scheme so far as the Surrey Yeomanry would collapse, or an entirely fresh Surrey Yeomanry would have to be raised with no tradition, no history, no continuity. That at any rate was not a dilemma that any of us cared to contemplate. Eventually it was decided that we should carry on, and at any rate give the new conditions a trial. The NCO's said they would stay on if the officers would do the same. That settles it. The Surrey Batteries started life with the old senior officers and the old senior NCOs. The scheme was that a brigade of R.F.A., the 98<sup>th</sup>, should be formed from the Surrey and the Sussex Yeomanries. Each county Yeomanry was to provide two batteries, three of them to be 18 pounder batteries and the fourth a Howitzer.

It was obvious, of course, from the start that an amalgamation of two regiments from different counties would prevent difficulties, grave difficulties. It was the general feeling in the Surrey Yeomanry that if we must amalgamate with anybody then let it be with the Sussex. Here let it be recorded that if ever a newly formed unit was blessed in its inspecting officer, then that unit was the 98<sup>th</sup> Surrey and Sussex Yeomanry Brigade R.A. in its first C.R.A. The problems which the new C.O. had to face were grave enough. Firstly, of course, he knew absolutely nothing about gunnery. His adjutant, Major A. Eeles, was most anxious to help. In Sussex he found that he already had the nucleus of two batteries, senior officers, senior NCOs, guns, harness and equipment. The C.O. started with the huge advantage of Melbourne House with its stables, horses, and riding school as H.Q. for the brigade and for both the Surrey batteries. The Guildford detachment was abolished for the time (it has since been reformed) and all the work of the Surrey batteries was done under one roof. In itself a huge advantage. Another advantage was the assistance of Captain Lawrence. This officer, who was originally a Royal Dragoon, came to the Surrey Yeomanry before the war as R.S.M. Since that time in various ranks, and in almost every conceivable capacity, he made himself nothing less than a regimental and a brigade institution. The senior officers and NCOs were all old yeomen, recruits were coming in well and were of an excellent stamp quite up to the old standard.

But firstly, all the old equipment had to be handed in. Quite a large number of old yeomen had resigned when the change was made and it was a lengthy and exasperating task to collect their kit. Then we had to draw new kit, issue it, and collect our guns and harness. Surrey Yeomanry badges on caps were replaced by gunner badges, although the Surrey Yeomanry badge (Queen Mary's Own) was worn on the collar to maintain the tradition. Nobody who had not had bitter experience of it can imagine the amount of stuff that goes to complete the equipment of a battery. Guns have to be provided and a new gun shed. With a lot of help, a lot of work, a lot of waiting, but with a lot of goodwill and laughing the Brigade got its guns, its harness and all its paraphernalia. But there was still one grave difficulty to be overcome, the date of training. The Surrey Yeomanry had always trained at the end of July and beginning of August, the Sussex Yeomanry in May. Absolute consternation was expressed by the officers of both counties at the idea of being called out at any time by their own. But if the brigade was to be a brigade and not two halves, different camps were not to be thought of and the C.O. definitely refused to consider them. He decided that training should take place in alternate years to suit either county. It caused some difficulty and friction but not nearly as much as was expected, and the system justified itself.

And finally, if the 98<sup>th</sup> Brigade, is now a brigade and not two halves formed by two counties in uneasy and loveless wedlock, the credit thereof is largely due to two men. B.S.M. Packer and B.S.M. Batcombe. That then briefly, is the history of the amalgamation told with many omissions and short-comings.

Colonel Calvert who commanded the Surrey Yeomanry did not wish to continue in the gunners so a new Brigade Commander, Major Borwick DSO, who joined Surrey Yeomanry in 1901 was appointed.

We had the choice of becoming drivers or gunners. Naturally I became a driver as, with my knowledge of horses and harness, I was able to help others, many we had to teach to ride. This is where our riding school was so useful. I used to travel to Clapham on a motor bike. On one occasion I was returning home on the London-Portsmouth Road at about 10.00p.m and after I got through Ripley I saw several police. As I approached the entrance to Sutton Place a policeman started directing me in. Apparently I was just ahead of a car taking the Prince of Wales, later the Duke of Windsor. He was visiting the late Duke of Sutherland who was then owner of Sutton Place. Later this was the home, until his death, of Paul Getty of world renown.

There was training every night of the week, except Sundays, 391 Battery at Clapham and 392 Battery at Guildford in the drill hall which was re-opened. B.S.M. Burke was in charge. A typical week's training at Guildford was:

Tuesday: Recruit gunners' drill, drivers instruction in harness fitting and cleaning  
Friday: N.C.O.s and trained gunners gun drill  
Saturday: Drivers riding drill

This training was very necessary prior to the first camp, as gunners, in Arundel Park in August. We entrained in London with horses, guns and ammunition to Arundel Halt where we detrained. Each driver had two sets of harness plus saddle to look after. We used to polish and burnish in our bell tents, so you can guess there was plenty of smell and not much room. All metal parts were of steel which needed regular polishing/cleaning, especially after rain when it could go rusty overnight. We used to put all bits, spurs, etc., in sacks with sand and keep shaking to clean. Each driver also had a leather leg shield worn on his right leg to ease pressure from the offside horse. In addition a riding crop was carried to help control the lead horse.

A full gun team consisted of two sergeants, one with the gun team and one with the ammunition limber, five drivers, three with the gun team and two with the ammunition limber. There were five gunners, two on the gun limber (one a corporal) and three on the ammunition limber. Gunners had the most uncomfortable ride ever conceived as there were no springs. Over very rough ground they had to hang on for dear life. Some of the drivers used to bump them as much as possible! At a later date the gunners were mounted on horses as seen in the King's Troop displays.

The camp was great fun and a new experience. Galloping about with a heavy gun behind was often hazardous. Both the lead and wheelers were very important. The driver in the middle was either pulled or pushed – he had little option. One had to keep all traces tight, especially on turns, as a leg over a trace could be very dangerous. The wheelers had the full weight of the gun and limber to control for stopping as there were no brakes. Over a ton to be stopped by .....*[text missing at bottom of page]*

We had one incident during camp to show our regret of the passing of the Surrey Yeomanry as cavalry. At this camp we were supplied with equipment from the regular Field Artillery – horses were hired from private livery stables, most of which were unused to this type of equipment. These unsuitable horses (several pure black) gave rise to our having a “rag”, supposed to be the burial of the Yeomanry Spurs. Four of the funeral blacks were harnessed to one of the field guns, late one night and candles were fixed to the equipment and carriages. They were paraded round the camp with some of the troops following behind on foot. All were amused and there was great enjoyment, then someone suggested serenading Colonel Borwick. The parade was lined up outside the C.O's tent. Colonel Borwick came out to see what was taking place and was not amused. He immediately ordered the dismissal of everyone taking part, and the principals to report to him at the orderly tent the following morning. The outcome was a severe reprimand – and the whole affair not to be mentioned again. I thought we were accompanied by the band with muffled drums playing a funeral dirge.

At the end of the camp I was made a Bombadier (equal to a Corporal) much to the consternation of many of the old brigade who had served throughout the war and were still drivers or gunners. Again, I attributed this to my knowledge of horses.

The next camp was a memorable one as we went to Larkhill for live round practice on the gunnery ranges. It was our turn to fall in line with the Sussex and have the camp in April. We entrained in London, on a Sunday, for the journey to Amesbury Station. Besides the guns, limbers, etc., we had the remounts supplied by contractors. Many of the horses had never been harnessed, other than with a saddle. It was pouring with rain when we arrived at the station. After unloading, the horses were matched up as well as possible. Harness was taken out of sacks and put together. I found some of the drivers had put breechings on as breast collars and vice versa. We had great difficulty in getting the horses limbered up and it was dark before some of the teams arrived at Larkhill, about four miles from the station. One or two teams ran away and some of the horses had broken legs as well as a driver or two.

We had a very enjoyable camp. Galloping to the rangers, unlimbering and galloping back from the guns whilst they were fired was very exciting. On one occasion I was riding the leaders when the gun wheels must have gone into a large hold. I suddenly found myself and horses on the ground with the other horses also down with a near miss. We were going at a full gallop at the time. The pole came away from the limber and there was chaos. I think one horse had a broken leg and one driver or a rider on a limber a broken leg or arm. It was a nasty experience but quite common on the hole pitted ranges. By the end of camp we had trained the horses as much as possible for the next unit who took over from us. Towards the end of camp I caught hold of a team that was running amok and got a rein round my thumb, pulling off the skin and nail. I reported to the M.O. who thought the thumb should be amputated. I abused him so much that I suppose I should have had a court martial. It was an incredible coincidence but in the 1950's when I was guest as master of the Chiddingfold Farmers' Hunt, of the late Roger Sewell, master of the Surrey Union, at their Hunt Ball in Dorking, that he introduced me to a Colonel of the R.A.M.C who said my name "rang a bell". He asked me if I was at camp at Larkhill in 1924. I asked if he was the doctor who wanted to amputate my thumb and he was! I must have made an impression for him to remember thirty years after the incident on Salisbury Plain!

The next camp was at Easter when we joined a regiment at Shorncliffs whilst some of the regulars went on leave. This was an experience as our battery was all greys, horses which were being gathered together again after the war. We had much more as drivers to contend with, as grey horses easily become manure-stained which takes some removing.

About 1926 I left the brigade as I now had a farm of my own and could not spare the time for training or attend August camps which were in our harvest period. I was sorry to leave after such an enjoyable time. In 1936 I tried to go back with a commission but the waiting list was quite long so I abandoned the idea.

## 12. HOME GUARD

It was not long before I was in uniform again. When Antony Eden asked for Local Defence Volunteers (LDV), I was one of the first to volunteer. With my OTC and Yeomanry experience I was commissioned as a Lieutenant and throughout the war, until we were disbanded, I was in command of No. 2 (Eashing) Platoon "C" Godalming Company 2<sup>nd</sup> Surrey (Farnham-Godalming) Battalion of the Queens. "The establishment", in 1941 comprised of two officers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenants H.H. Crunden and W.G Worthy, both were later promoted to Lieutenants. They were schoolmaster living in Godalming who remained with me until we were disbanded: 5 sergeants, A.V Keefe, who acted in the capacity of Sergeant Major, C. Ranger MM, Sergeant Marshall MM (who later commanded the Puttenham Platoon), S.E Wakefield and J.F Darke who acted as Quartermaster, all of whom served in the 1914-18 war. In addition I promoted 6 corporals and 9 lance corporals, as at the time I had about 150 men and organised them as a company, although we were called a platoon. These were divided into four sections (equal to platoon strength) each under a sergeant.

Our headquarters were at Eashing Farm. To start with, the men were called volunteers wearing an armlet with L.D.V. I went daily to company headquarters at Godalming, to sort through the list of those who wanted to join. Many were 1914-18 war veterans and provided a nucleus of trained soldiers from whom we were able to pick NCO's. An excellent smart group of men were enrolled and I considered our platoon one of the most efficient Home Guard Units.

One man I attested was named Finisher Coronation Kingshott. I had always known his as "Fin". When I spoke to his mother, who was the wife of one of Lord Midleton's woodmen, she said as he was born in Coronation Year, 1911, and was to be the last of her family, she named him Finisher Coronation. Actually she had one or two more children later on. I think twenty-three in all and only stopped because the house was not large enough, although Lord Midleton had had it extended!

To start with I used the office at the farm as a Quartermaster's Stores and my secretary issued uniforms, etc., as the men came along. Weapons consisted of anything one could lay one's hands on – old shot guns, revolvers, pikes, Molotov cocktails, etc. Later, a large Nissen hut was built on or grass tennis court, complete with Quartermaster's Store, rifle racks, tables, chairs, forms, etc. This was used for training lectures, etc. In fact, I gave a dinner on one occasion for 100 officers and men and served a hot meal from the farm kitchen.

Later, we became a proficient, well-equipped unit. Every man had a rifle and we had two small guns towed behind Landrovers. In addition we had Bren guns, mortars, hand grenades, etc. We constructed an assault course also used by army units stationed nearby. In addition we made a 100 yard rifle range with butts, etc., for firing .22, .303, or machine guns. The Nissen hut was retained after disbandment for use as a Home Guard Club. It served for many years until after *[...text missing top of page...]* the district and interest nonetheless waned. We kept the rifle range going.

We formed a farm football club which did very well in local leagues. At one time there were five sons of my head herdsman, Jack Sivyer, playing. Volunteers joining the platoon were from the Eashing housing estate and from Milford, Eashing, Hurtmore, Puttenham, Compton and Shackleford, as well as some from Godalming. Later on as numbers grew to over 150, another platoon was established at Puttenham commanded by one of my sergeants, W.F Marshall MM, who was promoted to Lieutenant.

Being of a military mind, I always insisted on strict discipline and smartness. Sixteen men were on duty each night under a sergeant or corporal. Men were on duty every fifth night. This was a marvellous voluntary effort, bearing in mind they worked during the day. This was in addition to one or two nights and weekend training. They received nothing for this service although later, were allowed a subsistence allowance. The sixteen paraded at the farm about 7.00 p.m and had half an hour's drill before going to their respective stations for the night. They returned to the farm at 6.00

a.m to have ammunition collected and to be dismissed. This practice was never varied although it meant a cycle ride of over three miles each way for a number of the men. As so ably depicted in the BBC television series "Dad's Army" there were a great many serious and humorous incidents during the four years. After France fell there was the problem of parachutists landing and of Fifth Columnist activities, who were already in the country.

One early scare was when I had a patrol stationed in a summer house on a hill in Peper Harow Park. About midnight I had a report back that they thought parachutists had landed. I turned out all the men available, went to the park and surrounded the area where the patrol had thought they heard movements. Converging on this spot we found the parachutists to be a flock of sheep! We were always on the alert to lights or signalling to aircraft by Fifth Columnists. On one occasion it was reported from a patrol on the A3, near the Hog's back bridge that a flashing light had been seen from Guildford. When I arrived it certainly appeared that signals were being made. I always carried a two foot long piece of piping and a tripod in my car. The idea being to look through the pipe and pinpoint where the light had been seen and to leave it set, under guard until the morning when one could pinpoint the exact position. I duly set the tripod and piping. When my sergeant looked, he thought it should be higher and reset the tripod. I had another look and decided it should be still higher. After about an hour the supposed light appeared over the trees. It transpired as the northern star was rising behind the trees, giving the impression of Morse Code as it passed large or small branches, in the form of distinct dots and dashes! Oh well.

There was one period when we were ordered to stop all cars at night whilst a raid was on, and make the occupants switch off all lights. One night I had a patrol of two men on the Hog's Back. A car was stopped, driven by an officer from Aldershot. He insisted on going on, saying he was not going to be stopped by men "playing at soldiers" and started to drive on. One of my patrol stuck his bayonet through a rear tyre. We took his number and reported his uncooperative conduct. I believe he was severely reprimanded.

It was fortunate we had the neighbouring Witley Camp, rebuilt after the 1914-18 war. It was one of the largest Canadian bases in the U.K. Adjacent to Eashing, in Peper Harow Park, was the base ordnance depot of the Canadian, where at one time thousands of Jeeps were assembled as well as hundreds of tanks parked on the Hogs Back. I was very friendly with many of the Canadian officers and able to get army transport when I wanted to move my platoon. On several occasions I had the Canadian staff band for parades, especially on Armistice Sunday when we marched from Eashing to Shackleford Church. The Canadians were so impressed with the hours the Home Guard put in, on a voluntary basis, that on one occasion, when they had a review of troops in Peper Harow Park, by Canadian "Top Brass", the C.O included my platoon. He insisted I took part and headed the march past. This was a great honour, not only for me and the platoon, but for the Home Guard in general.

Being in the Aldershot command I had the opportunity of attending talks and lectures at Aldershot. I attended the first important talk given by General Montgomery of Alamein, to about 1,000 regular officers. It was most impressive. When he arrived on the platform he informed the company he would not put up with any interruptions. He gave about two minutes for everyone to cough, etc., and stated that if they were likely to do so during the talk they were to leave. No latecomers could enter the room once he started speaking. During this talk he dropped two bombshells. He stated that every officer from Major downwards was to attend P.T drill every morning, as he must have officers as fit as the men they commanded. Secondly, he said he was no longer going to tolerate wives following their husbands about as they could not do their job if handicapped in this way! He more or less told them he expected wives to leave Aldershot. He kept his audience spellbound for about an hour. It was he who said that all units were to be fully informed as to their objective and not kept "in the dark", as ad happened on past exercises. If they were out to capture a position they should be told so that if their leaders were killed they could carry on the task. Such orders as "we



are going to try” were out and the words “we will” substituted. He said the word “impossible” was not in his vocabulary, merely that the impossible might take a little longer.

On one occasion I was called to a conference for senior officers, held in a big house near Crooksbury, Farnham. General Montgomery was commanding a big divisional exercise with several thousand men involved. I was informed that my platoon would act as recce patrols from Elstead to Tilford, the River Wey being the dividing line between the opposing forces. This entailed my men crossing the river and doing recces in the enemy lines. I was told we would be issued with assault craft to cross the river at several points. I pointed out that my men did not come on parade until 7.00 p.m and had to return to work at 7.00 a.m the next day. As this was a night exercise I turned out about eighty men. The operation was successful and my platoon captured several of the enemy and brought them back over the river for interrogation. It was quite an experience.

Through our efficiency I was offered the opportunity of taking my officer and about sixty men to Sandwich, Kent, for a week, to be attached to the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment. We took part in everything they did. My two officers and I lived with their officers, the sergeants were accepted in their sergeant’s mess and the men joined their troops. It turned out to be a most interesting experience as it was the week prior to the ‘D’ Day Landing. We could see the Mulberry Harbour sections being towed along the coast. When the men went by bus to Ramsgate or Folkestone, they went with all the blinds down and under strict supervision, to prevent them seeing the vast preparations which were taking place. I became very friendly with their officers and had a great time. Every morning we had R.T practice and I consider my officers and sergeants were up to the regular’s standards. Even during the T.E.W.T.S (tactical exercise without troops) our knowledge was commended.

On one occasion the officers were holding a dance and I joined two of their officers touring around Kent to get “booze” for the occasion. On the particular day we went it was a “rubberless day” (no rubber-tyred vehicles could be used) we had to take a Bren carrier, not the most comfortable ride. We must have visited most breweries in Kent, to cadge supplies.

When we travelled from Guildford by train there was a point on the railway which ran along the coast. I used to tell the tale that this was one time in the Home Guard history that we were the only troops between the Germans and the British Army. When we returned from Sandwich and the “D” Day Landing had taken place life became hectic again with the “doodlebugs” and “V1’s and V2’s. We had several land in my area as well as bombs, both 1,000 pounds and incendiaries. We were finally stood down in 1945 by a parade of about 1,000 men on the parade ground in Witley Camp. To many of us it was the end of four years of very strenuous and often sleepless service, bearing in mind mo of our duties were at night.

### 13. KENYA

I was honoured to receive an invitation to judge Guernsey cattle and Hampshire Down sheep at the Royal Agricultural Society of Kenya's Show in October 1958. Unfortunately, the show was cancelled owing to foot and mouth disease, however this was fortunate as it enabled me to be present at the London Dairy Show in October 1958, when our herd of Eashing Guernseys swept the board. I was asked to judge, however, in 1959.

I travelled, by sea, from Southampton to Genoa which made a very pleasant four days. I spent a day sightseeing in Rome before flying to Nairobi on 12<sup>th</sup> September, where I was met by my brother, Kenneth, now Archdeacon. At the time he was residing in the Bishop's bungalow near the cathedral. I spent two days sightseeing in the city of Nairobi and surrounding districts, including the national park. There were plenty of giraffe, wart hogs, zebra, gazelle, wildebeests, baboons, bambis, etc. From then on I visited owners of Guernsey cattle who entertained me generously for five weeks, both before and after the show. Mrs Simon (Bunny) Sowerby fetched me from Nairobi on 16<sup>th</sup> September. We drove 130 miles to Nanuki, through beautiful country to our first host and hostess, Pat and Mary Walker-Munro. They farmed about 700 acres with 300 head of cattle. The farm was situated at the foot of Mount Kenya, capped with snow throughout the year. A week before I arrived a herd of 50 elephant had been through the farm destroying many trees. The Walker-Munro's lived in delightful surroundings. At night guards and lights ringed the homestead to keep away buffalo, rhino, etc., and other intruders. The atmosphere was very clear and one had a panoramic view of up to 60 miles.

On 17<sup>th</sup> September, we drove to the Outspan Hotel for lunch and tea, prior to going to the celebrated Tree Tops where we spent the night. This seemed very modern compare with the old Tree Tops which was burnt down during the period of the Mau Mau uprising. We had an excellent dinner, a few hours sleep and then spent the rest of the night seeing buffalo, rhino and all sorts of animals, both large and small coming to the water hold where salt had been placed to attract them. We saw one good fight between two rhino. E had to walk from the hotel to Tree Tops behind a "White Hunter" who put on a good act with his rifle poised, telling everyone to be silent so as not to attract animals which might kill them. He pointed out ladders up various trees which he told us to use if we were attacked. Everyone crept up trying not to make a noise. This was good showmanship because when we came down next morning he could not have cared less whether the animals saw us or not!

Although Tree Tops only took a few guests each night, we met a man from England who was a member of my hunt! We had a drink or two with him and during conversation he asked if Bunny knew a Simon Sowerby as he had been asked by his firm in England to see him. When Bunny said it was her husband I think he must have queried in his mind why we were spending the night together at Tree Tops. The result was he never did call on the Sowerby's during his visit!

We left the next morning, 18<sup>th</sup> September, visiting the Wanbugu Farm Institute and met the manager a very interesting Englishman named Gray. We spent two or three hours here after which we drove through miles of ranching country to Thompson Falls. After having taken the wrong road for 20 miles we could not get through the Aberdare Mountains owing to a landslide. Our next host was Mr Mervyn Ray. We arrived at 6.00 p.m, just before dark after a 360 mile journey. He lived in one of the most charming houses and grounds on the Kinangops. The Queen Mother stayed there and Princess Margaret also visited at a later date. Mervyn came as a settler in 1906, travelling by ox wagon. He reclaimed 7,000 acres. When I arrived he was farming 3,000 acres having sold some and given some away. He took me to see Jim and Barbie Nightingale at Sasuma Estate on the South Hampshire Down flock. The Nightingales are a large family and since then they have put the boys into farms. My family visit them and they visit us when in this country.

Mr Ray took us to celebrated fishing hotel, Brown Trout, which has since been burnt down. We also went to Mr and Mrs Venn Fey's who lived nearby in a charming spot with a mountain forest adjoining the garden at an altitude of 8,500 feet. The forest was full of Mau Mau during the trouble and when her husband was away, Mrs Ray lived in a tower with her young sons, guns always at the ready. After two days with Mervyn Ray, Mike Barratt from the Egerton Farm Institute picked me up on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September, for the rest of my tour through Nzoia country, a trip of 230 miles through all different types of scenery. I was very sorry to say goodbye to Bunny Sowerby who had been such a charming hostess and I could not have met anyone nicer on my first visit.

I often stayed with Sir Mike and Lady Blundell in a charming spot at Nakuru. He had a nice house, with extensive grounds. During my first visit he had just started growing tea with which he was very thrilled. On my next visit he took me for a ride around the Kinangops to see how such a beautiful reclaimed estate had been again divided into smallholdings for African families, the result being they were not producing as much food as previously under European management.

About 3.00 p.m. after a long and sometimes dusty journey on dirt roads, we called in at a new clubhouse being opened at Endebess, complete with gold swimming pool and the whole works. Here we met Tiny and Sheila Heath, who took us back to their house for the night on the edge of the Elgin Mountain, supposed to be the largest mountain standing on its own base. We had a ride around the mountain on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September, my birthday – we had plenty to drink to celebrate. We visited a Mr and Mrs H. D'Oleir, from Ireland, who were farming 1,200 acres, including 200 acres of coffee. Mrs D'Oleir put her foot in it by saying she came to Surrey once and had an awful day's hunting with a pack called the Chiddingfold Farmers, on a hired horse from a man called Podger! She did not know, at the time, I was master of that pack. She apologised and said it was not such a bad day after all but compared to Ireland I think it must have been! On Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> we went for a field day at A.S Minchen's farm at Kitale. I had to comment on various Guernseys in his herd. Later we went to tea with Mr and Mrs F. Lloyd Jones who kept over 300 grade Guernseys plus a few pedigree cattle. Mrs Lloyd Jones was a Miss King who lived at Home Farm, Shackleford, until three years old. This was one of the houses on my father's farm. Next day we went to Jack and Honor Robins at Daisies Farm, Moibne. Jack was the Labour Manager of the Surrey War Agricultural Committee in Guildford during the war, so I knew the family well. He was managing a farm for Lindsey Troup, who was Chief Executive Officer of the Hampshire War Agricultural Committee. I saw some wonderful corn crops on this farm.

We then went back to Dennis and Bobby Whetham's at Kipkipus for the night. On Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September, we visited J. Begg to see his Hampshire Down flock. He had just started but was rather disappointed with the ewes he had imported. Afterwards we went through the Elgey Native Reserve to inspect Guernseys on African holidays. These were very impressive, in fact, the Guernsey has always done very well in Kenya as owing to the pigment of the skin they are not affected by the sun as much as other breeds. We have sent several bulls since this date to Kenya, including the A.I Station at Kabete. We had lunch on the escarpment overlooking the Rift Valley, a wonderful sight. We then went to see Mr and Mrs Upson at Kiptabus. Peter and Elizabeth Burrell came to dinner. Peter, Bunny Sowerby and Bobby Whetham are brother and sisters, the Burrells are a well respected family in Kenya. On Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September we went to see Peter Burrells' herd. On Dennis's farm I saw wattle stripping for the first time. He had an interesting sideline making flies for fishing and employed about five or six women. It was very successful as he was sending them all over the world. We left in the afternoon and travelled through Mau Summit and Nakuru to Peter and Sheila Howard for the night.

On 26<sup>th</sup> September we visited a large farm belonging to Peter Ireland Ltd., and then to Mrs Turner (Betty), and saw real pioneer farming of 1,000 acres. We left on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September and spent two nights with Mike Barratt and his wife, calling on Mr and Mrs Hawkins for lunch and a Mrs Gibbs for tea. We visited the A.I Station at Kabete where we saw seven Guernsey A.I bulls. On the 29<sup>th</sup> September, we journeyed round the district of Kiambu, the Kikuyu Reserve with Barry Yates

and were very impressed. Then on to see an animal at Limumu on a native reserve, which was to have been exhibited by the first African to enter the Royal Show but could not go because of foot and mouth disease in the district. It was a very fine animal and I gave much encouragement by saying it would certainly have been among the prize winners had it been shown. I gave a special rosette for the animal which gave the African so much pleasure and prestige.

September 30<sup>th</sup>, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, I stayed with Ken during the time of the Royal Show.. On the Wednesday I judged the Hampshire Downs, mostly Stuart Tory's breeding, indulged at the Guernsey Club dinner in the evening at the Muthaiga Club which was very enjoyable. Thursday I made an early start to judge a large entry of Guernseys. It was an honour for me to be the chief guest of the President, Tony Seys, at his luncheon. I judged again during the afternoon, including the Hampshire Down Championship. I went to the Royal Agricultural Society dinner in the evening at the New Stanley Hotel. Friday and Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> October were spent looking round the showground, making broadcasts, interviews, etc.

In 1959, as a member of the Council for the Royal Agricultural Society of England, we were considering various sites for a permanent home, the idea being to find a vast expanse of open ground such as an aerodrome or similar environment, where trees could be planted to disguise the bare open area. After seeing the wonderful effect in the Royal Showground in Mitchell Park, Nairobi, where the forest had been cleared to make avenues rings etc., I came back to the Royal and suggested we should have a re-think and that someone from our Council should go over and see Mitchell Park. I think Sir Walter Burrell did pay a visit at a later date. Since then, of course, we have settled in Stoneleigh, Warwickshire, which was already well-wooded and has proved very satisfactory.

Saturday evening I went with the President, Tony Seys and his wife, Rosemary, to his home Rhodora, Nakuru, about 100 miles from Nairobi. We arrived about 11.00 p.m having had dinner on the way. The English hack judge, Betty Skelton, came with us. This was one of the nicest estates in Kenya and a show place, maintaining an excellent herd of Guernseys, many of which had been imported from England.

It was the first time I had seen coffee grown which was done extensively on this farm. I had an opportunity of riding round much of the estate as the Seys kept several riding horses. This was a very enjoyable stay as Tony and Rosemary seemed to have everything, including a very large house-staff, many gardeners and sice (grooms) for the horses. Their head herdsman, Tudor Ace, came from England to manage the Guernseys. When they eventually left Kenya he returned to the U.K to their estate in Devon.

On Tuesday I was collected by Chris Eames and stayed with him and his wife Heather. Their farm was also at Nakuru, named Olbonata. I had a very enjoyable time looking round his 2,000 acres and 500 head of stock. He employed about 100 staff from the following tribes: in the dairy, Kipsiguo, Maasai and Luo and on the farm, Tugen Kikuyu and Turkana. Employing 100 staff including their families, etc., they had nearly 1,000 people to care for. It was interesting to see them line up, often in the pouring rain, for their food issue of maize meal, their staple diet.

On Thursday we went to Mr and Mrs McKinley at Molo for lunch and saw their herd of 300 Guernseys, pedigree and grade, then we went on to Lake Nakuru and saw thousands of flamingo. Looking across at them, on the water, was like looking at a red tulip field. On Friday Chris Eames took me to Nakuru to Jim and Barbie Nightingale for the night. They took me to a Romney sheep field day at T. Hamilton Fletcher's and then on to another flock on Mau Narok. I met Judy Russell who used to hunt with my hounds. Incidentally , her mother died of a heart attack out hunting with us a few years later.

The next day Simon and Bunny Sowerby took me to lunch at the Brown Trout. We had a delightful ride through African reserves and had tea with F.R (Steve) and Maggie Stephens. He was a solicitor in Nairobi and had a small farm with pedigree Guernseys. During my second visit in 1964 I stayed with Steve and Maggie during the time of the Royal Show. I was with them when they announced to their house boys and gardeners that they had sold the house and garden to an African. It was a terrible blow to their staff and I actually saw men, who had been with them for many years, weeping. They said their lives were finished because Africans were unwilling to work as servants of other Africans. I stayed that night with my brother, Ken. Simon and Bunny came to dinner.

On Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> October, I spent the morning looking round Nairobi. In the afternoon Ken and I went to the opening of the second workshop of the CMS centre by the Hon. W. F. Coutts, CMC, MBE, MIC, who was Deputy Governor of Kenya at the time. The evening was spent at a drive-in cinema. On Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> October, I attended a service at Nairobi cathedral which was most effective.

On Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October, Simon Sowerby took me to the farm owned by J. Ellis. A very businesslike man although a rough diamond. He was farming 1,700 acres and appeared to have made a lot of money. He kept and bred racehorses. In the afternoon Ellis took me to the races. This was very impressive. We had an excellent lunch in the splendid grandstand and saw some good racing. I went out with the starter and started a race. One of the trainers, Maurice Vallance, was from a Godalming family. He often rode my point-to-pointers out hunting as a boy. His brother, Ricky, now a successful trainer in Wiltshire, was my jockey on several occasions. (The local vet, Scott, was with my vet, Bullen, in Godalming for a year in the 1930's). I stayed the night with Dick Tory, a cousin of Stuart Tory from Dorset, the worldwide authority on Hampshire Down breeding. Dick was manager of the Juja Properties East Africa Ltd. They farmed 90,000 acres of which 60,000 was sisal, the rest ranching and mixed farming. Their labour force was about 2,000 with 14 European supervisors. It was the first time I had seen so many teams of Oxen drawing trucks of sisal, on lines, from many parts of the estate to the factory, as many as ten teams each of ten oxen. The boys just drove the teams over their harness before hitching up.

On Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> October, I went to Ken's for the night prior to flying to Mombasa where I stayed at the Oceanic Hotel. It was so hot it was almost unbearable, but the sea was so blue, unbelievable. Mombasa adjoins Malindi which I suppose is one of the best beaches in East Africa. I returned to Nairobi on Friday to Ken's bungalow as he was away on safari near Lake Victoria. Simon picked me up on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> October and took me to his home at Broomhill. This was another wonderful estate and his herd of Guernseys were excellent. On the Sunday I went to a meet of the Limeru drag hunt at Mr Kidmans. He had a large farm and bred and trained about 60-70 bloodstock. I was shown round by Miss Ann Beechner who was out there for a year. Kenneth Prebble, joint master, came to dinner in the evening. He was in West House, Cranleigh in 1939.

I gave a party at [blank] for the many friends who had entertained me during my visit. I invited Ann Beechner as my guest. During a dance I asked her where she came from and when she said Northampton I asked if she knew Johnny Jeyes. She said she certainly did as he had been her boyfriend before he married a girl from the south, but she could not remember the name. I asked if it was Janet Stovold and she thought so. I informed her Janet was my daughter and we got on like a "house on fire". What a small world it is.

Kenya was one of the nicest countries I have visited. Being on the equator, the days were very hot and nights cool. It certainly went from daylight to dark about 6.00 p.m when everyone sat by a good log fire for the evening. I was very sorry to leave on 20<sup>th</sup> October, flying back via Khartoum and Rome.

I went to Kenya again in 1964, to judge Guernseys and Hampshire Down sheep for the second time. I flew to Gibraltar and joined the Canberra as far as Aden where I disembarked on 28<sup>th</sup> September.

On board I met a very nice couple, Howard and Margot Letty. He was one of the chief officers of Shell-Mex in Aden. As the Canberra docked in Aden at 6.30 a.m, they asked if I would care to go back with them for breakfast before departing for Kenya at 9.30 a.m. I felt very important as we were met by a Shell launch, direct from the Canberra and on arriving at the quay a car was awaiting for us, plus a shooting brake for the luggage. When Howard rang the airport to ask if the flight had been altered he was informed it had left two hours early owing to trouble at Mogadish. We went to the airport where he really took those in authority to task saying that I was going to Kenya to judge at the Royal Show and it was imperative I went that day. The result was that I could not get a plane until the next morning so someone else had to judge the sheep. I stayed the night with the Letty's and they drove me on a tour of the countryside. It was interesting to see the very fertile ground and good crops growing where irrigation was applied. Before catching the plane to Nairobi they took me into the desert and it was fascinating to see the camel trains etc.

When I stayed with Pat and Mary Walker-Munro they took me to Samburu Game Lodge where we spent two nights having driven 150 miles to get there. On entering the park we met a herd of over 30 elephants on a track to the lodge. We had to wait 20 minutes as some of the cows were divided from their calves and it was too dangerous to go on. We saw many different animals, lions, elephants, buffalo, zebra and gazelle. Pat and Mary later took me 60 miles to Thompson Falls to meet David and Jenny Slater who drove me a further 60 miles to their home, calling on the way at Mrs Hilton's where I gave a talk to African farmers on dairy cattle. Jenny was at school with Ken's daughters, Elizabeth and Paula. Their house was at an altitude of 8,750 feet. I found it hard to breathe during the night. Next day I went to stay with Mike and Brenda Barrett at Egerton College where Mike was one of the leading lights. I stayed again with Jim and Barbie Nightingale and their family. Their farm, of over 2,000 acres, had 170 Friesians in milk and 500 breeding ewes. It was terrible wet weather. I saw over 2,000 bags of wheat standing in the open ready for collection. They had to turn the bags every day so that the sun would dry the corn after a good drenching during the night. This went on for a fortnight. We went to their son, Geoffrey's farm of 1,300 acres. He had 800 beef cattle and was growing 300 acres of wheat. It is interesting that on some of the ground in Kenya two crops of wheat can be grown in the same year. I was interested that the Nightingales and many other farmers had their combining and baling done on contract by two Englishmen. When I was there, although they only had a few acres to complete, the contractors asked if the Nightingales would mind if they went away for a day or two up country where the weather was good. They travelled over 100 miles on dirt roads to reach the dry weather. They told me that by careful planning they could keep their combines and bailers running for eight or nine months of the year. What a difference to the UK where with careful planning and good weather combines do not work for more than three or four weeks!

Things had changed somewhat, it was the first day of Independence and the show had dropped the title "Royal" and was known as the Kenya Agricultural Society Show, although otherwise there was not too great a difference. At the show Jomo Kenyatta gave a speech about the future of agriculture in Kenya. During his speech the microphone broke down and I have never seen a man so calm while repairs were being carried out. The more they tried the worse it got until, eventually, it was repaired and Jomo said he was very pleased "the magic" had been repaired!

I stayed for two days with Avian and Mary Llewellyn Jones on the Milmet Estate. They had a lovely bungalow and a large expanse of lawns. On asking how long it took the African to cut the lawns with a push mower, Avian said he did not know but he had been cutting them for five years full-time. The grass grew quickly so that it was rather like painting the Forth Bridge – when one eventually finished it was time to start again.

I stayed again with Chris and Heather Eames who took me to see the Rhodora Estate as Tony and Rosemary Seys had sold it just before Independence. One could see drastic changes as it had been purchased by an Indian who had brought in many of his relations to do the work and only employed a quarter of the labour the Seys had employed. There were two Englishmen still left at that time,

Everett and Mumford, the Seys herdsmen had returned to England with them. I was very sorry to leave again after having spent five weeks in the country.

I had an opportunity to visit again in 1969 as representative of the Royal Association of British Dairy Farmers at a conference of the Royal Agricultural Society of the Commonwealth. As usual I did part of the journey by sea, leaving Southampton 16<sup>th</sup> September on the P&O Iberia which was on the Australian run. I met a charming couple on board, Michael and Middy Dumper. They were travelling to Australia before flying to the New Hebrides in the South Pacific as Michael was returning to the British Residency, Vila, New Hebrides, where he was Chief of Police. I did not realise it at the time but they were administered by both Britain and France on an equal basis and everything had to be done in unison. The Dumpers had been to the UK to leave their daughters Jane and Linda, at a convent school in Midhurst. We were able to collect them on many occasions and bring them back to Eashing for a day out from school. As usual, I spent my birthday, 21<sup>st</sup> September on board and was royally entertained by the Captain and crew. We drank champagne until midnight and as it was Middy's birthday on 22<sup>nd</sup>, we started again and kept on until dawn. What an excellent party. In 1979 the Dumpers have settled on Albany.

The only way I could get to Kenya via this route was to fly from Dakar where we arrived on 24<sup>th</sup> September, I stayed in the hotel used by passengers in transit which was well out in the desert. We arrived in the early morning and as the ship was not leaving until the evening I asked Michael and Middy to come and have lunch with me at the hotel and see what it was like. After we disembarked we had all the touts round asking if we wanted a taxi. We eventually selected one. On arriving at the hotel the driver would not take any money or give the fare as he said my friends would eventually need taking back to the ship. This is where we made a mistake by not paying per journey. As I had nothing to do and had to stay two nights at the hotel, I decided to go back to the ship with them for a final drink. Again the driver would not take any money as he said I would need to be taken back to the hotel, again no price was set. Before arriving at the hotel on the return journey he stopped, looked around his tyres, poked his head in the window and said, "You know how much it's going to cost, don't you?" As I did not want to be the subject of a misplaced person's enquiry, I asked him to get me to the hotel as soon as possible. He asked for an excessive fare about which I started arguing and had all the touts outside the hotel around me. I said I would have to go into the hotel to change a cheque. When I got inside the manager had no sympathy and told me all I could do was pay up. It was a very expensive way of learning a lesson. Unfortunately, I had to spend two nights in the hotel with the temperature well over 100 degrees. These were two of the most uncomfortable nights in my life, what with having to sleep under a mosquito net and having to get up several times a night for a tepid, cooling shower. Not my idea of amusement. I left on the 5.15 a.m flight on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> September and flew to Nairobi, landing in several African states during the journey, some of which were at war.

The conference was in the pavilion on the showground, Jamburi Park, which was formerly, before Independence, known as Mitchell Park. It was unfortunate that the President, Prince Phillip, did not come with us on this occasion. Again I judged the Guernseys and had an opportunity, during the show, of having a chat with Jomo Kenyatta who impressed me, being so wise and sensible in the way he had put Kenya on a sound footing and accepted the whites as well as Africans in the economy of the country. He was a wonderful man, bearing in mind he was head of the Mau Mau and spent a long time in prison. During the war he was on a farm in Sussex and married an English girl.

During our conference, much activity was going on in the main ring in preparation for the displays during the show. The chief event was a display similar to our Royal Tournament. The massed band consisted of army, navy, air force and police personnel with displays by the various services, even gun drill by the navy. I looked out of the window and noted that the commands and drill control was under British instruction. During the show display there was no white person visible except for one standing by the vaulting horse during the physical training display! The guard of

honour was provided by the Kenya Air Force who were absolutely with as much precision as one would see in the UK. During the display one could see the effect of the excellent training they had received.

My knowledge of Kenya helped me show some of our English delegation different parts of the country. Major Hugh Collins, secretary of the show, was a great help to us on this occasion. I left the delegation after the conference to make contact with my old friends who had remained behind after Independence. Unfortunately, many had gone to other parts of the world to “start again”. When the conference was held in Australia and New Zealand in 1973, attended by the Duke of Edinburgh, several people from Kenya came as delegates with the idea of ascertaining if it was worth moving to either country. I was very pleased that two great friends, Peter and Liz Burrell were on the tour and I spent much of the time with them. Since then, unfortunately, Peter has died but Liz is still in Kenya. She is a great sport and horsewoman and a good polo player.

Another enjoyable visit had enabled me to stay with many old friends, and to make new friends. I flew back to England on 12<sup>th</sup> October and unfortunately have not been back since. After three tours I have come to the conclusion Kenya is one of the nicest countries I have visited. Summing up:

1. A lovely climate – hot days and cool nights
2. Some of the best game parks in the world.
3. Wonderful coastline all round Mombassa and Malindi.
4. Ground on which two crops of wheat can be grown in the same year, which we cannot do in England. On one farm I visited I saw three crops. One being sown, one halfway through growth and one being harvested. It is hoped that Kenya will go on for a long time in the same successful way it was under the jurisdiction of that great man, Jomo Kenyatta.



### 13A. JACK OF ALL TRADES

There was a period in my career between 1943 and 1963 when I must have been restless, foolhardy or extremely energetic. Three friends, A.H Belcher, Major D. Hooper and Captain Septimus Stratton, employees of the dairy business of Lympos and Sme. Guildford, decided they would like to be connected with private enterprise. I joined them and became chairman of Belton cafes Limited, (the first three letters of Belcher and the last three of Stratton), a holding company for the various businesses.

In 1945 we purchased the freehold and business of Taplins Park Butchers, celebrated for high class sausages, making about a ton and a half per week. In addition, other goods were sold such as pork pies, poultry etc. In 1958 this was bought by Mr and Mrs J. Toovey, proprietors of the Corona Café, Guildford. In 1946 we took over the two best hotels in St. Leonards on Sea, in Warrior Square, practically on the sea front. On the right was Warrior House which we purchased freehold. It had been damaged by a bomb and we had a large government grant of £35,000 from the War Damages Commission, to which we added £10,000. We rebuilt a very up-to-date dining room and seven self-contained flats. On the left was the Edinburgh which was leasehold. We heard of the hotels through an army officer, Captain Alder, who was in command of an anti-aircraft battery stationed in the very large garden between them, which belonged to Warrior House. It was later taken over by the Council as the upkeep was too great for us. There must have been nearly two acres of ornamental gardens. Alder spent evenings in one or other hotel and became very friendly with the old man who owned them. He became interested and was asked if he would consider taking them over. Alder was very keen and asked if we could co-operate with him, which we did. When he was demobbed we appointed him manager of both. The Edinburgh remained open all year round as many rooms were let to retired people.

The Warrior closed during the winter which is usual for seaside hotels. This I thought silly, as it meant standing off good staff for the winter. We circulated large companies, offering facilities for winter conferences and came to an arrangement with the National Coal Board to take the hotel from 1<sup>st</sup> October to the end of April. We had the use of the hotel for Christmas week and also at Easter. It was full to capacity at Christmas, 80-100 people. We arranged four days of good food and all possible Christmas festivities. The National Coal Board arranged conferences for managers from all districts in England, Scotland and Wales. We provided conference and lecture rooms, in addition to a mine layout, in the basement, for lectures. About forty managers and sub-managers and lecturers attended fortnightly or three-week courses. They worked very hard, in spite of what people may have thought. Even in the evenings and during leisure hours they were still talking "shop" amongst themselves.

We also had a restaurant and ice cream parlour, the Remo, in Redhill and an ice cream parlour selling snacks on a good site on the front at Brighton. All were good outlets for F. Raymond Stovold Limited ice cream.

Later we purchased a builder's business, J.W Waltham in Guildford, although it never functioned before we re-sold it. In the hope of making quick profits we bought the Basingstoke Mineral Water Factory. It seemed profitable and simple to aerate coloured water! It did quite well but eventually we sold out as the factory was too far away to keep a tight control. Possibly we should have waited until Basingstoke was demolished for the new town.

In 1950 A.H Belcher died, followed by D. S Hooper in 1955. Both their widows wanted the return of capital. This only left myself and Stratton who had no money to put into the business. We gradually sold the various enterprises at the end of the fifties and early sixties. The last to go were the hotels which Stratton managed, these were sold to a French family.

Not content with the above, it was in 1944 when Percy Trower of Guildford, asked if I would go into partnership with him to buy P. Crouch and Son of Guildford. The company had six stage coaches plying between Stoughton and Guildford daily, which we sold to the Aldershot and District Traction Company. In addition there were eight coaches used for hire, the favourite journeys being to Southend and greyhound racing! There was a hire car and funeral department, complete with hearses, old Rolls Royces, etc. We kept the business for several years, having spent a lot of money on rebuilding the premises.

In order to be self-supporting, as we thought, we purchased in 1945 a derelict garage and coach building business, James Hogger, Meadrow, Godalming, which we had to re-build from scratch. There were only two employees, both army deserters. Hogger did not even know their surnames, they were just Joe and Bill to him. He paid Joe and Joe paid Bill, so no records were kept. As they had no insurance cards and paid no tax we had no alternative but to get rid of them. A friend of Trower's from the Isle of Wight, sold his boat business and came to manage the business. He was an exceptional mechanic but no great businessman. We got the coach-building side going again and engaged a craftsman coachbuilder who had been one of the top men in Dupels, the well-known coach-building firm. With the help of two other men he built some fine luxury coaches. Some went to Crouch's and some to other operators. He did everything from his head and had no blueprints, a very dangerous set-up if one had labour difficulties. When we started receiving orders from abroad, I knew that because it wasn't a tip top organisation we could find ourselves in difficulties. I saw the red light.

In 1945 Trower was offered the freehold of his farm at Tangle and asked me to take a half share, which I did. Eventually I exchanged the half share in the farm in Hoggers before putting it on the market. I finally sold it to Mr Dutfield and his son who had been contractors for GPO deliveries. When the GPO bought them out they had money to invest and went into coach-building seriously. They opened a proper factory in Reading as there was only room for two coaches at a time in Godalming.

On reflection I have come to the conclusion that the years from 1945-1960 were not only the busiest years of my life but that I was overdoing it. In addition to the aforementioned businesses, for which I was responsible, I had my own affairs to look after.

During this time my commitments were:

Farming approximately 1,400 acres.

A milk business serving 8,000 houses daily.

A restaurant and milk bar in Guildford High Street, employing forty to fifty staff.

A dairy shop in Godalming High Street and one in Farncombe.

Very heavily involved with the Surrey NFU, being Chairman in 1944 and 1960. I was the first son of a member to be appointed: father was chairman in 1926.

Served at NFU headquarters in London on the then Producers Retail Committee of which I was chairman 1943-44

Help from the Chiddingfold Farmers Hunt in 1943, becoming secretary. From 1950 appointed master until hunt ceased in 1969.

Elected to the Council of the Royal Agricultural Society of England in 1952 – still serving in 1980, when I was elected a Vice President, a very high honour for my services.

Elected to Council of English Guernsey cattle Society in 1953 and President in 1960.

Elected to Council of Royal Counties Agricultural Society in 1934, Chairman and Show

Director in 1964 until it amalgamated with the Sussex and Tunbridge Wells Society to form the South of England Agricultural Society.

On the board of the West Surrey Farmers' Association Limited from 1953.

Appointed chairman of the board when it became Surrey Farmers' Limited in 1963.

In addition I served on many sub-committees of the above Societies. I was on the Council of the Surrey Agricultural Association from 1930 and responsible for bringing this Society (founded in 1829) and the Redhill Agricultural Society (founded in 1862) together by holding a combined show at Eashing in 1954 and 1955, following which I was made president. The two societies amalgamated to form the Surrey County Agricultural Society.

The society then moved about the county but without much success. I got the Major and corporation of Guildford to allow us to hold the show in Stoke Park, one of the most picturesque sites in the county, the first being in 1960. I was elected president and honorary show director and have been so since this date, and the year 1981 being our 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary in Stoke Park.

Had it not been for the relaxation of hunting in the winter months and yachting in summer, I should have gone "crackers". As it was I was verging on a breakdown in 1955. A friend of my wife's invited me to Bad-Pyrmont in Germany for three weeks' rest. Even during this time I spent one week in bed, under the care of a German doctor who gave me several injections daily!

## 14. HARRY DAVIS A LIFETIME OF LOYAL SERVICE

Harry started work for my father in 1906 and was still working for my brother Percy at 70 years of age. He was the proud possessor of the Royal Agricultural Society's Gold Medal awarded for fifty years on the same farm or for the same employer. He had a bar to the medal at sixty years and I was honoured to be able to pin on the second bar for his seventy year's service. As a member of the Council of the Royal Show and President of the Surrey County Agricultural Society, it was a unique occasion to be able to award this to an employee of one's own family. Harry was a wonderful man, always conscientious, cheerful and willing to help anywhere and at any time.

At eighty years of age he was interviewed by the press and no better words than his own, can describe his life:

"I first met Mr Stovold's father, Mr E.F. Stovold, who was living at Polshot, Elstead, when I was nine. He used to grow hops and when I came home from school I used to take them to Farnham on a horse drawn cart to be dried in the Broomleaf hop kilns. Sometimes I used to sleep in the kilns and very cosy it was with a charcoal fire. In the morning I'd get up early and bring the horse and cart before going back to school."

"A lot of new fangled things – machinery and such – were coming on to the farms then. One of them was the self-binders: before that they used to mow the corn with scythes. While I was on holiday from school old Mr Stovold bought one. It went all right but made a horrible screeching noise that properly got on your nerves. I was only nine but, as bold as brass, I told them that I'd find that screech. My stepfather was driving the horses round the field so I followed him and nosed about. It looked to me that the big driving wheel was dry. So I took the oil can from under my stepfather's seat and emptied the whole can on to it. That stopped the screeching sure enough. 'It takes a boy to put it right', I told Mr Stovold. And he gave me 2/6d – half a week's pay in those days!"

"At fourteen I left school and started work at 4/- a week. I helped with the cattle for the first year but didn't like it and asked if I could work with the horses. I won my first ploughing match at Shackleford with Duke and Daisy in 1907. What a fine day that was: not only for the horses but for me. My pay went up to 10/- a week. We used to get up at 5.00 a.m, feed the horses, have breakfast at 6.00 a.m and go to work at 7.00 a.m. Mr Stovold used to ride from one farm to another and round the fields on an old pony. Sometimes he'd come and work with the men. He'd bring his bread and cheese and beer and sit down and eat with them. He worked hard, old Mr Stovold, as hard as the men".

"It was a different world then. We used to get some really hard winters. We'd go ice carting. We used to pick the ice off the ponds for packing round food and meat etc. as refrigeration. There was a big ice well at Charterhouse School and at many of the large houses in the area. Many horses and carts were used to cart it from Lydling and other ponds: tons of it were rammed into the wells and battered into great frozen blocks.."

"Fertilizers were hardly known then, least of all the modern chemical kind. We used a lot of sulphate of ammonia we got from the gas works. We used to mix salt with it because you daren't put it on too thick. They were hard days then for us and for Mr and Mrs Stovold. We never had any holidays or Saturday afternoons, never even thought about it like they do today. All the years I worked for Mr Stovold I never worked on a Sunday, only to feed horses and livestock. He was against it. He said that if the harvest couldn't get done on a weekday it would never be done on a Sunday. Only once in my whole life have I ever gone harvesting on a Sunday!"

“But the harvest suppers what do’s they were! We looked forward to them for weeks. Mrs Stovold used to do the cooking herself. What a worker she was. She used the big copper – salt beef, roast beef, carrots, onions, dumplings and Christmas pudding, everything you could think of. And all helped down by ‘wash-stand’ jugs of beer. A wagon went to Guildford to fetch the bee. Twenty or thirty of Mr Stovold’s workers and their wives would come, also a few locals – fifty or more, all excited and laughing and enjoying themselves and making their own entertainment. The big hall in the Lydling farmhouse would be crowded out. There was just the best of everything at these harvest suppers; the finest do’s a man could imagine. They’d give a kiddies party later and again there’d be the best that could be provided.”

“What days they were. I used to help Mrs Stovold in the farmhouse – a big barn-like kitchen with doors at each end and the big hall with its great open log fire. At that time Master Ray was about three and Master Percy, for whom I am still working, ten months. I used to pump the water in the farmhouse and if they all had a bath it used to take me all of an hour and a half.”

“They had two or three cows and I used to milk them for the house. Mrs Stovold made her own butter and we were allowed to have a whole can of buttermilk for only tuppence. She used to skim it off by hand – it wasn’t done by machine like now – there was pretty well as much cream left in it as there was taken off.”

“I had two years shepherding and once had 1200 sheep all on my own. But it was the horses and the ploughing and the matches that I liked most of all. I’ve travelled all over the place to take part in ploughing matches: as far as Petworth, twenty miles each way. I won the Surrey County Ploughing match five years in succession, beating Jack Pearce, the ploughing champion of England. At seventeen I had to open every furrow for a whole ploughing match – ‘let the boy of Stovold’s do it’, they said. I said, ‘What have I got to put up with if I makes them crooked. It’s a big thing for a nipper isn’t it.’ But I managed it all right although it took me two whole days. I remember there was one crooked furrow, No. 13. A man came up and said, ‘I bet you £1 you’re afraid to plough with the men today because there’s No. 13 to spare. I said ‘I’ll take you on and bet you another £1 that I win.’ I did win and took home £5. £3 in prize money and £2 in bets. That was in 1909. I thought I was a millionaire.”

“You want to know what happened to my horses, Duke and Daisy? Well, it was the strangest thing. A few days after the war broke out in August 1914, the army requisitioned them and six other horses. It was a sad day. We were left with only ten so I decided to go into the army. It was soon after getting out to France that I met Duke and Daisy again, in the retreat from Mons. We were losing a hell of a lot of horses with mud fever. I was riding as an outrider with a gun team when I asked the sergeant to stop a minute because I thought I could recognise two horses coming down the road. I wasn’t mistaken, how could I be? They were Duke and Daisy in good condition and they recognised me all right. They were terrible days for horses, standing in thick mud, never under cover – just like us. I was made an NCO, drove a gun team, collected a bullet and was sent home.”

“After the war I went to work with old Mr Stovold again at Lydling. I was offered 30/- a week, said that I earned more than that in the army with other men working for me and I was given another 7/6d. I moved with my wife, Annie, to Shackleford and she’s still with me. It was holiday time when I met Annie. She was on her way home with a wickerwork basket. She stopped to rest at the side of a field where I was harvesting. I offered to put her load on to the cart while she walked back to Shackleford. Instead of giving it her back I said I’d take it up to her that evening. We courted for seven years and married in 1918 while I was home on leave. We have lived in Shackleford ever since and brought up five children, a girl and four boys.”

“The war killed the Shackleford ploughing match but they held a match at Guildford in 1921 and I took the first prize. It was wonderful to be back after all that mud and fire to Flanders – and it has

been like that ever since. That's why I'm glad the Surrey Show is doing so well and drawing so many people, even from the towns. Of course I shall be there, how could I miss it?"

Harry was born in 1892 at Elstead and died at Elm Tree Cottage, Shackleford, on 11<sup>th</sup> February 1977, aged eighty-four.

Harry's brother, Bert, who also worked for my father E. F. Stovold, joined the artillery and lost a leg during the war. Their half-brother, from their mother's first husband, was nicknamed "Curly" because he wore his hair in the true, old fashioned military style, parting it in the middle with two curls in front. He worked for Mr Edgar Horne M.P, later Sir Edgar, in Shackleford. He joined up at the same time in the Royal Marines and lost a leg up to the hip during the attack on the Mole at Zeebrugge, when a German Gotha dropped a bomb on his ship. He had a false leg strapped to his opposite shoulder. After the war he returned to Sir Edgar Horne as gamekeeper and could dig as well as any man. He would walk all day beating up partridges, often walking three or four miles to meet the guns for a day's shooting. He was a first class shot and owned a very fine black Labrador.

There were no fine artificial limbs then as there are now, they were more or less "peg legs". Both Bert and Curly liked a bit of poaching in later life. If chased, it was said the two "dots and carries" made quite a noise on the road. They could tip-toe on one leg each, but the "peg legs" gave them away.

Their mother was married for the third time to Fred Lemon. A son, Joe, from this marriage is still working for my brother Percy in 1979 at the age of sixty-nine, a fine record for her.

**Original text from press article – interview with Harry Davis  
(basis for above section ‘Harry Davis – A Lifetime of Loyal Service’)**

Eighty year old Harry Davis is a proud ploughman of Surrey: a man of many memories of life on the land in this county from the turn of the century and through two world wars. With the annual show of the Surrey County Agricultural Society being held at Stoke Park, Guildford on Bank Holiday Monday, May 29 these memories come flooding back.

For Harry, still active, alert and with an easy sense of humour, has been a star of Surrey’s farming show world for many years. A lover of horses he is the winner of countless cups for ploughing and the proud possessor of the Royal Agricultural Society’s medal with two bars, 60 years service on the farm. He – and men like him – have made such shows possible.

But let Harry himself put the clock back and tell his own story of a working life spent with the Stovold family who have farmed in Surrey for more than 400 years. Mr Raymond Stovold of Eashing Farm is president of the forthcoming show, the largest one day agricultural show in Britain.

“I first met Mr Stovold’s father when I was 9 and living at Elstead. He had two other farms at that time - Thundry Farm and Turners Farm. There was a lot of hops culled in those days. When I came home from school I used to take the hops into Farnham on a horse and cart. I used to like that. Sometimes I used to sleep in the hop kilns and very cosy it was with old bed things and a charcoal fire. The farmhouse was only twenty or thirty yards from the hop kilns. I used to go into the house and ask for pudding. In the morning I’d get up early and bring the horse and cart before going back to school.”

“A lot of new fangled things – machinery and such – were coming on to the farms then. One of them was the self-binders: before that they used to mow the corn with scythes. While I was on holiday from school old Mr Stovold bought one. It went all right but mae a horrible screeching noise that properly got on your nerves. I was only nine but, as bold as brass, I told them that I’d find that screech. My stepfather was driving the horses round the field so I followed him and nosed about. It looked to me that the big driving wheel was dry. So I took the oil can from under my stepfather’s seat and emptied the whole can on to it. That stopped the screeching sure enough. ‘It takes a boy to put it right’, I told Mr Stovold. And he gave me 2/6d – half a week’s pay in those days!”

“At fourteen I left school and started work at 4/- a week. I helped with the cattle for the first year but didn’t like it and asked if I could work with the horses. I’ve always liked horses. And Duke and Daisy more than all. I won my first ploughing match at Shackelford with Duke and Daisy in 1907. What a fine day that was: not only for the horses but for me. My pay went up to 10/- a week.  
“

“In 1912 Mr Stovold also took over Home Farm. We used to get up at 5.00 a.m, feed the horses, have breakfast at 6.00 a.m and go to work at 7.00 a.m. Those were the days when old Mr Stovold used to ride a bike from one farm to another. When he went round the fields he rode on an old pony. Sometimes he’d come out into the fields and work with the men. He’d bring his bread and cheese and beer and sit down and eat with them. He worked hard, old Mr Stovold, as hard as the men”.

“It was a different world then, on the farms. We used to get some really hard winters that we don’t seem to get now. And off we’d go ice carting. There were no refrigerators then so we used to pick the ice off the ponds for packing round food and meat and other things we wanted to keep cool. They used to have a big ice well at Charterhouse School – I believe it is still there but they don’t use it any more. Isn’t scientific enough is it? They used to send men out to the ponds all around

picking ice and carrying it back in horse and carts: tons of it we'd ram into the wells and batter into great frozen blocks."

"Fertilizers were hardly known then, least of all the modern chemical kind. We used a lot of sulphate of ammonia we got from the gas works. We used to mix salt with it because you daren't put it on too thick. They were hard days then for us and for Mr and Mrs Stovold. We never had any holidays or Saturday afternoons, never even thought about it like they do today. But we never worked on Sundays. All the years I worked for Mr Stovold I never worked on a Sunday, only to feed the cattle which had to be done. He was against it. He said that if the harvest couldn't get done on a weekday it would never be done on a Sunday. Only once in my whole life have I ever gone harvesting on a Sunday!"

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## **Transcription of what appears to be interview with Harry Davis**

At Broomley Farm, Farnham they culled a lot of hops there, the biggest part of their farm was hops. They had hops right from Compton, you know where Compton is, have you been on the Farnham Road, where you go up Compton Hill, the ground used to come right down to there and it used to be both sides of the road, right down to Farnham practically on the station. That's where the farm was, the farm border was one side of say there and there was a pub just on there and the other side of the road there was a station (They want Broomleaf Farm where the kilns were). The kilns were there and that's where you slept the night. Used to sleep in the kilns there.

### ***On straw or what?***

No, they used to have old bed things there and there was a fire there at night, old charcoal fires and all that you see. I used to go in the house and ask for pudding. The farm house was only a matter of twenty or thirty yards from the hop kilns.

### ***Do you know what sort of prices hops were in those days?***

Oh, I never had no hand in it, I didn't know nothing at all about that.

### ***How did they take them in, in sacks?***

In big, what they used to call surplaces. They used to, well, when they picked the hops out in the field they used, there was bins, frames a little bit bigger than this table, about as wide bit a little bit longer, then they used to fasten these surplaces in the frame. Look then the tally man what used to come when they had their basket full. They had what they used to call a tally man that went round and took the measure and book the measurements and they used to sew them up and put another one on.

### ***Sew them up?***

Yes with a big needle and a string. No weight to them, they used to be bulky, not heavy. They used to shoot them over the kilns. They had these charcoal fires and dried them. They used to keep turning them, then when they was finished they used to bang in proper hop sacks like big, well when they was full they was round. They'd be as long as it is from the floor to the ceiling. They had a rammer that was worked by machinery, the same size as would fit in the bag. They used to keep shovelling the hops in there when they was ready, after they dried, shovel them in and this thing keep going up and down, up and down.

### ***How did this thing work that went up and down?***

Well it used to work on a pulley like, drove from up above you see an used to ground and round and used to take it up and down and they used to keep ramming them in.

### ***Mr Ray said he slept in Farnham sometimes, do you remember that at all?***

No, I don't remember him no.

### ***You don't remember him going there. He was too young to go when you used to go?***

He was only a baby when I was doing that – he wasn't born when I used to go, so it was afterwards.

### ***And what about this story which I couldn't get down correctly about this binder and this screeching?***

About what? It was when the binders first started coming in, like. Before that they used to mow the barley with scythes. And the wheat and oats and that they used have what they called a side delivery rake. It used to be a thing fixed on to a mowing machine and then, you've seen that thing

on a combine, that rake thing that goes round, well on this there was a bog wooden one and the sails as we called them was far apart and every time that sail come round he swept the lump of cord off from the knife onto the ground and then people used to have to follow them around and tie it up and put it out round the way for them to come round the next time. You tied it up and then they used to stand them up afterwards to dry you see. Then we get to this binder, well binders was just coming into use. When they first brought them in they used to tie it with very fine wire but then that didn't last long they got to this string you see. Well he bought this binder and that was the first one he ever had, well there weren't many about then anyway. That was old Mr Stovold when he lived in Elstead. I was only going to school like and it was in the summer holidays and they was cutting a bit of oats up at Turners Farm on a field they called, now, Thundry Hill and they got up there and stated. They cut a road round the oats the day before and started cutting it and everything worked alright and it was tying alright and there was a helluva screech.

It kept on making this screeching noise. They stopped and they oiled this and they oiled that and had another go and then the same old thing and they walked all round and that was out of date for them walking round that field. The Governor and the engineer, they used to come out from the firm what supplied them just to see that everything went alright, they stood up and said go round. My stepfather had to go on round like and still carried on. We got about half way round I kept looking, eyeing round, eyeing here and there and all of a sudden I see that the big wheel, there's a big wheel in the middle of it that carries the binder. Fastened to that there's a cog wheel and a big heavy chain on that and run back on to another spindle at the back. That drove the whole lot you see. Well I thought that never ought to be like that and I didn't dare to say nothing because me and my stepfather weren't too good friends. Well anyhow I never said nothing, not myself when he was busy setting on there watching, and there was an oil can standing in the sand under the seat and I gets this oil can, screws the top out so's the oil run out, tipped it on this wheel and emptied the can. Now he said what you been an' done. I said what the others couldn't do. I said I've stopped that screeching. He said I thought you broke something. I said I haven't broke something I've put it right, I said what the other couldn't. When he got to the corner and these other two there, they said how was it now then they couldn't hear it screeching. He said it took a boy to put it right. I said it's finished with what you ought to know better and done it before and the old man give me half a crown.

***Oh my goodness, I couldn't remember all the parts of the binder that you told me about.***

Oh I was nosy I was poking into everything. Little did I think about three years, three or four years after that I'd be driving one myself.

***Have you got any more stories you remember?***

Oh I thought of another student we had a laugh over, well a little bit more than a laugh first off. There was Godfrey Nash from Farnham, his father was a solicitor. He come there as a student and me and Mr Stovold was getting the wagons ready to take the lambs to Easter market. You see we used to have ewes and lambs here and fat them for Easter market, then we used to tie hurdles round the wagons to keep them in to take to market and old Mr Stovold said get hold of both ends of that rope then so that we can start heaving and have half each side. Is there two ends he says. I don't like to tell you what he said. Go on...he said, have you ever seen anything that only got one end he said. I laughed at him, he said have it got two ends? We tied the middle of the rope so that we got half each side of the wagon you see so as to have a bit to tie the back one in.

***Mr Ray Stovold asked who were the people who went to the war with you?***

Oh my missus' brother, Frank, Frank Hedger, and a brother to that old chap what just died in here, Frank Lamboll, and two boys named Bedman used to work for the old Earl of Middleton at Peper Harow. We all five went together and we all got split up. Frank was with me all the time and they're all dead.

***Do you remember any amusing times in the army – with horses and things?***

I don't know about amusing times, we had some very awkward times sometimes, especially about a year or two after when we got short of horses. Well we lost a helluva lot of horses with what we called mud fever. They were standing in mud and that they were never under cover. They were like us, we were never under cover. A lot of them got mud fever. We used to put them out on the picket lines you see. We used to tie them up with a line down the middle and tie them to that line and put a rope on one of their hind legs and peg him back and then we had a lot of horses come over from America. They were running wild, sent over to us to put in a gun team.

***How many did you have in a gun team?***

Six

***And you were an outrider?***

Yes, and afterwards when I got this dogs leg on me.

***When you what?***

When I was made NCO I would drive for a long time. I used to have the back pair on the pole. There were two on the pole and two in the middle and two in front. And they used to have an NCO to take the rear, what they call the rear wheel driver.

***And you went to an NCO?***

Yes

***When was that?***

Oh I hadn't been in the army, only about three months. I was in the army only seven weeks before I was in France. Well I joined up 10<sup>th</sup> August, then I went all over the place, went to Newhaven first, that was the wrong place, then I went to Sheerness and that was still the wrong place and then I landed up at Woolwich. Went straight into the riding school. Had two days in the riding school. The tough riding sergeant said you know enough about horses you don't want to come here no more. Then it wasn't long before I was out in France. I was out in France before the end of September.

***When was it you saw your two horses, Duke and Daisy?***

Soon after I got out there and then in the first week in November we was in the retreat from Mons. I expect you've heard about the retreat from Mons, well we was in that and looked like coming back over into the sea. We got pretty well near back to France when we stopped them. Thought two were powers before we stopped them. Come back 120 miles in a fortnight.

***Good gracious, what were living conditions like when you were out there? What sort of food did you have?***

When it was alright and they could get it to you we used to have some good food and we used to throw food away.

***What about biscuits?***

We had biscuits, have you ever seen those old fashioned dog biscuits? Great big ones, about like that. Well that's what we used to have to eat, some of them a day.

***Is that all?***

Yes, if they couldn't get any rations to you. We always had a day's emergency rations in our kit, strapped on to us and we didn't dare touch that unless we had been without grub for 24 hours.

***Was there tinned food in those days?***

Oh yes, tinned bully beef. We used to chuck it away by the box full

***Did you, tea as well, you drank tea out there?***

When you could get it, anything. And rum, I used to drink that every day. You had to have something to keep you going.

***The pictures always show set weather, was it wet?***

All up through Southern France and Belgium and that you only had to have one days rain and you was knee deep in mud. Water lay all under the ground. All up through Belgium you never had no wells, you only just had a little hole dug in and you dipped into the water as you wanted it.

***What about when Frank drank the rum then?***

They saved up their blooming rum and him and two or three more got their bottles full of rum and then they had a night and drank it. The next morning they was dead out. I had to do their work and me own to shield them.

***You didn't have any?***

No, I used to have a drop every night, I did. They saved it and then had a good old do. In my section I used to issue it out, but when I issued it out the next night I said they had to drink it when I was there, no more putting it in a bottle. I know I had a letter from him and he said I thought I was going to have to do the hardest days work I have ever done in my life. He said that was right and tell you Frank was dead because he was dead drunk on rum, unconscious he was.

***Was he?***

All three of them unconscious and dead out, didn't dare report it. Well I should have had to if anything had happened.

***What was the ration, what size ration did you have?***

Well we used to get a pretty good ration, I used to get a gallon a day for my section.

***How many men was that?***

24

***So there was not a shortage of rum?***

No, and then Christmas 1915 our old Captain, one of our Captains, Captain of our lot, my force section, he was a member of a brewery and he had four barrels of beer sent out from England, one for each of our sections, so we took out two gallons of beer and put two gallons of rum in the barrel and mixed it. They had a cease fire over Christmas, both sides like.

***How long for?***

For 24 hours and I went to get up next morning and I couldn't, my coat was freezed to the ground, they had to leave me covered up, they had to strip me coat off the ground.

***Under canvas were you?***

No, outside, we never had no under canvas.

***Didn't you?***

No we had to sleep under the hedge where we could get. We never had nowhere to get in.

***What about cooking and things?***

This same old captain, his mother sent out some turkeys, so we was up on the Somme then that was Christmas, we was up there getting ready for the battle of the Somme, that was in fifteen I think, and that started in July, 1<sup>st</sup> July 1916, Battle of the Somme, and there was a lot of clay about there and we got the old birds and plastered them all over with clay and hung them over the fire. We had a fire and roasted them like that and when we thought they was cooked all the feathers come off with the clay and they was alright ad we had to take the innards out afterwards.

***What about coming back to Lydling now, what about some stories of Lydling? What about the pupils?***

Oh, one of the pupils, Bob Baker, I don't know where he is now, the last I heard of him he had a farm down Rogate. The Governor told me that he'd sold that, I don't know. He used to come round very often at one time and look me up. Now, poor old Bob, that was when the old man took over Peper Harow, well his brother Alfred was a sort of bailiff down there and he got called up for the army and they took over Peper Harow ground and they kept the cow team like, the same as Mr Stovold's got, they weren't all pedigree Jerseys like his are. Bob used to have to go down there mornings and help milk 5 o'clock in the morning. When I used to go to the stables at 5 o'clock I used to call him but he was sleeping in one of the attics at the big farmhouse up there like and the window faced out onto the yard close to my stable door but I couldn't wake him. I threw stones in the windows and get the stones in the house and I said I tell you what to Bob, get a long bit of string and tie it on the bedclothes and that's what he done and I pulled the bedclothes out in the yard and woke him.

***Can't you bring into it how you used to go to Charterhouse ice-carting when there weren't any fridges when you used to take the ice off Lydling pond?***

They used to have an ice well at Charterhouse, fact it's still there, only now they don't use it. Isn't scientific enough now is it. We used to get some very hard winters ten, we don't seem to get them now. We used to get freeze up and then they used to, Charterhouse used to send men out to the ponds all around and then they used to pick it out, break it off and pick it out the side and take it out and shovel it up.

***What did they use it for?***

They used to pack things in ice because they hadn't got refrigerators.

***This was the school?***

Charterhouse School we used to pick ice for and we used to shoot it up and then there used to be two or three men down in the bottom with hammers and as it went down they used to ram it all together so that it all freeze up into solid blocks. We had a week sometimes, hundreds of tons we put in. We took it up there with a horse and cart. When it froze up on the farm you couldn't do much else like only a bit of dung cart of anything like that and they used to pay so much for the horses and carts to take it there. We used to, ooh sometimes, fourteen, fifteen, perhaps twenty carts down there, 'cos you could only do it when there was a solid frost. There used to be a pond down Compton, outside the Withies, close to the Withies. We used to cart from there.

***When did fertilizers start coming, do you remember when fertilizers started?***

Oh yes, easy, we nearly...in the old man's time...fertilizers, early on, early in my time we never used none, not these chemical artificials what they're using today. We used to use a bit of sulphate ammonia, we used to get it from the gas works, what they used for making gas like, that's all the settlement from the gas and then we used to mix salt with it, with the sulphate of ammonia because you didn't dare put it o too thick. And then we used to cane it then, we used to sow it on for mangold crops and that sort of thing as well. But that's pretty near all the artificial you used to use and then if you got a corn crop wanted waking up a bit we used to give it a little bit of sulphate ammonia to give it a start again. Then, as the years went on these other chemicals came into force and the other sort died out. You get a bit of it now but they don't use nothing like they used to. And it ain't in the raw state like we used to use it, if you get it it's all ground up very fine.

***What did it look like as you used to get it?***

Well like big lumps. We used to have to break it up, pound it up. Then we used to sow it by hand them days, we hadn't got no manure drills, not first off, then the horse manure drills come out you see. We used to have a seedlip to sow it. Yes and I can remember when we used to sow the wheat with a seedlip.

***What was a seedlip like?***

Well you see it was a sort of kidney-shaped thing like that you see and it used to fit on there, just like that and you had a handle in the front and a strap over your shoulder. And if you didn't want to use the handle you could sow with both hands like that.

***What was the handle for?***

If you only sowed with one hand you just screw a little bit on your side and hold that handle look to take some of the weight from your shoulder you see and with that handle you could work the stuff down to the end where you was getting it out and sowing with one hand like that.

***How much did you carry at a time in this?***

I'd expect we had about half hundredweight when we started. Then you'd have bags every so far apart cross the fields you see.

***Would you sow seed from these things as well?***

Yes. Early on they used to drill a lot of the small seeds with a push drill. You used to have to push it, one drill at a time

***Just you pushing it, no horse?***

No horse, and then you come to the horse drill and the first horse drill that the Governor bought he bought second hand at Puttenham. I know I went up there and fetched it and that used to take four drills. We could use that drill for anything, for drilling corn, roots of any kind. You could put the coulter from six inches to two foot apart, whichever one you was wanting. You see if you was drilling mangold about two foot apart and Swedes about one foot six or one foot eight or turnips about one foot eight. Corn we used to have the drills six inches apart, put about thirteen coulters in the drill like.

***What year would this be?***

Well, that was about the second year he was at Lydling I think, that would be about 1907 when he bought that drill. People name of Summshe bought it off. And then when we was drilling wheat or anything them days we used to put three horses on the drill look. A man used to steer the drill, you used to steer it, there was no shafts, you just hooked the two horses on behind and one in front, somebody driving, a man to steer and another one walked behind the drill watching to see if everyone was running alright. Old Mr Stovold been out there driving them three horses along of me many a day, eating bread and cheese and a glass of beer.

***That's Mr Ernest Stovold?***

Yes. These never had the times as he has, he had to work to make his money. He ain't got much when he come to Shackleford. He ain't got a motor car to ride about in.

***He had a push bike was it?***

Push bike, when come from Lydling down here or anything when we had this farm here, when we took over old farm where Mr Willis is, there used to be a man named Henry Plummer had it look and then he died and his son took it over and he never lasted long, he was a radical. We were in war with him. He very soon went broke. Then they sold out and the Governor took that farm on as well, rented that farm from Peper Harow. Mitchen Hall that come in with it too.

***What about harvesting, you had the binders?***

Yes. That's another thing where the horses beat the tractors, they never done it yet. We finished harvesting in 1921 on the last Saturday in July.

***When did you start that year?***

We started early in July and we finished the last Saturday in July.

***How many acres would that be?***

Oh I expect we had anything up to 300 acres anyway. And that's one thing Mr Stovold would never allow, Sunday work.

***How many horses for harvesting that acreage?***

We had about 15 or 16 horses here then. I know I cut the last bit of barley on that Saturday. I cut 16 acres at Peper Harow and as I cut it they picked it up and we finished that Saturday night. The old Governor says you can have a rest and we took it, and when we finished that Saturday night it was dark I know, 10 o'clock at least. We fed the horses and went back and cleaned them and turned them out about twelve. He said let 'em go out 'til Tuesday. It was the longest holiday we ever had. We never had any Saturday afternoons nor nothing then.

***What holidays during the year?***

None at all.

***None?***

No, and he would never have Sunday work. He said if harvest can't get done in the week it will never get done on a Sunday. All the years I worked for him I never worked on a Sunday, only feeding cattle. I've only ever worked on a Sunday harvesting and that was in this one's (P. E Stovold) time. I was cutting a bit of wheat up at Puttenham and Reg Gray was on the tractor then and the binder broke down and we had about a couple of acres left. By the time we got it going again it was got too late, it was got dark so, that was on a Saturday and I turned out on the Sunday morning and finished it but that's the only time I've ever been harvesting on a Sunday.

***Another thing Mr Stovold asked is Bill Green's brother's name?***

Ben.

***Ben, and he worked at Lydling as well?***

Yes

***With the horses?***

Yes

***Still do?***

Yes. Ben he worked with the horses, he was with the horses up at Lydling along....

***How long has he been here?***

I don't know, has been here some time, still works here now. I expect he's been here thirty years.

***Not quite as long as you have!***

Might be a little more but I shouldn't think so, no he wasn't because he worked on the farm a little while and then he left and went gardening and when the war broke out he chucked up and went out of gardening and when it came out that all gardeners and everything had to be called up and nobody except agricultural workers was exempted from the army, so he left and come back on here to work.

***What about these harvest suppers then?***

Oh well, every year, I hardly know what year it started, (Nancy was 4 and the children used to have a party). Forty seven years ago was when it started and then she used to give the children a party first and then the grown up ones another night. Well it was a marvellous do, some of the best ever I had anyway. Mrs Stovold, she used to do all the cooking herself, she had these others to help her because there was all these vegetables and Dolly Lemon, my half sister like, old May Kingshott she helped and used to cook everything, have a lovely great joint of salt beef, never seen now.

***How many at the harvest suppers?***



I suppose we had twenty or thirty men working here then and they used to have guests, they used to have people there. Mr Brewer used to come like for entertaining and some other farmers and their wives used to come. We used to be anything up to 50 anyway. There was just the best of everything. My mother used always to open the entertainment by singing mussels and cockles.

***Where did they have this?***

In the farmhouse, in the big hall, full right up crowded out. Yes there's no doubt it's the finest do ever I've been to anyway, plenty to drink, plenty to eat and everybody enjoying themselves.

***And they used to give the kiddies a party afterwards didn't they?***

One afternoon. That's the one I remember so well when Nancy went, because she was only 4. No doubt she done a great thing of her.

***There must have been quite a few people to entertain.***

A lot of the farmers used to have invitations as well.

***Did all the employees live in cottages round here?***

Yes and down Gatwick, old Jim Duke and Mrs Duke used to come right down there didn't they. Yes old Jim Duke he was shepherd, he used to look after the sheep.

***How many sheep did they used to have?***

Oh we used to fat up anything up to 1500 a year. I had two years shepherding

***Did you?***

I had 1200 once all on me own.

***What about your horses then that year?***

Well I never had any horses then, well I cold a done. I went into hospital, I swallowed a bit of bone and I had to go to hospital and have it took out. Well they took it out at home but it all had abcess come up inside.

***What and you didn't work with horses for two years?***

Oh, yes, on and off, it was so sore and all raw. Too much walking with horses, you see. I went on the sheep, I had 1200 once.

***Dogs as well?***

No, only one dog.

***But you'd have quite a bit of walking with the sheep, wouldn't you?***

There was quite a bit of walking but 'twasn't so much as with the horses where you was walking all day from the time you got up in the morning 'til when you went to bed. Yes there was some good old days. There used to be a lot of us about here in every house and then we used to have, very often we had two or three men used to labour, often used to sleep in the buildings like. Every house, well look at up at Lydling, I can remember once there was the Taylor family, father and two sons. There was Arthur Aylward and there where Percy live now, before him it was all altered like. There was him and they had a lodger.

***Frys, how many sons did they have?***

Frys weren't here, wasn't far out at Lone Barn. And then there was, up there where mother was born up at Swallow Cottage there was her father's shepherd and there was Tom working here with the horses and there was Frank working with the sheep and then there were two houses up here, there was Johnny Stilwell, he was with horses and he got killed in the war. Then there was his father and another son lived in the next house, they was with cattle. Then there was Fred Lemon, me stepfather, he was there as well as me and then a half brother of mine worked there for a while

'til he joined the army. I think that's all the lot up that way, then there used to be a lot of us down here. Another brother of mother's Jack, he lived up at Sunny Side, he was a shepherd and then who was it lived in the middle house. And then there was two, then Tom lived down at Lumber Street in them houses didn't he. Then there was a bloke name of Edwards lived in the other house in where Chalmers is now. There's quite a number of us about, and my brother Bert, he worked here. He used to work with my father pretty well all the time, trimming the Swedes and that only he lost a leg in the war like. Used to have to trim them by hand like then, and out them by hand and wind the handle. He used to do trimming the swedes and that for the shepherd and they used to cut for the sheep and all had to be cut by hand first off. As years went on they got a machine to cut them.

***Coming back to these ploughing matches, what sort of entries, how many people would go in for these ploughing matches?***

Well, when we had what we called Shackelford ploughing matches that was in a three mile radius of Shackelford. The first year I went was in 1907. My stepfather, when he worked for Mr Stovold at Elstead he used to come over, Elstead come in it you see, well he come over and ploughed – there was over 50 teams in it that year and the next year I ploughed and I ploughed in the same bit of ground as he did last year, the year before. The next year I ploughed again, I ploughed up here where the ploughing match was this year (1971). The year after that when I was 17, in them days they used to open all the furrows, used to open every one for everybody. Well, there used to be a man lived over here, had his horses stabled over the road here worked for Plummer, name of George Voller. He always used to do it and open them all out before a ploughing match, then whoever's farm it was on, it was either on Plummer's Farm or our farm or Sir Edgar Horn's farm. Then had to chuck them all away. They just had a fair start, everybody. Well then the third year I ploughed, I was only 17, I was entered for the boy class but old Voller had chucked, had got too old he says for to do it, it was too much for him to open like so they couldn't decide who to do it so old Voller said well let that boy of Stovolds do it. The old man said to me what about it, I said I don't know, it's a big undertaking for a nipper isn't it. I said what have I got to put up with if I makes 'em crooked.

***What did this mean you had to do?***

I had to open every furrow for all the whole ploughing match.

***All the entries, how long would it take you for 50 entries?***

Took me two whole days. I had to open 63, 57 in the men's class and 6 boys. And then the morning of the ploughing match when I opened them all out and it was a bit of a windy day and me middle stick blew down and I was fearing it when I opened out the third one I made a bend in it. So the next morning when we come to draw out tickets a man named Mr Louard kept Amberley Farm he said boy I'm going to tell you something. I said what's that. He said I'm going to bet you £1 you are afraid to plough with the men today because there's number thirteen to spare. I said yes that's the one I made crooked. Yes I said that's it number thirteen. Right I said I'll have that £1 then. I said another thing I'll bets you £1 I comes in the first three. He says you've got a bit of a cheek you know. And I did I got the first prize. So I have £3 first prize and £2 on of him, that was £5, I thought I was a millionaire.

***What year was this?***

That was 1909.

***A lot of money in those days?***

It was when I was getting 10/- a week. Used to mess you about all one way or another. We never used to see much of him. You see he was away all day and nights, then time they got frown up well I was away in the army. Well afore I went in the army Ray went to school, well both of them went to school.

***You looked after them when they first came?***

Only when they were tiny babies. Well I helped her in the house, she was all on her own when they first come here from Elstead. Master Ray was about three year old and Percy was ten months old. He was a year old the 18<sup>th</sup> May as I was 15 the 20<sup>th</sup> May.

***You said you used to pump the water in the house, how long did it take you to do that?***

Well, I mean, if they all had a bath at night it used to take me all of an hour, hour and a half. There used to be a pump in the kitchen and there was a big old copper. The tanks for the bath water used to go right up in the attic, the top of the house and used to have to pump till the overflow started running. Well, you see, used to have to pump and fill the old copper up.

***How many gallons would this be?***

Oh, goodness knows, biggish tanks, couple hundred gallons I expect, it was two big tanks. They used to put a pip on and fill the copper up with water. There was no hot water system or nothing like that, only by the bog old grate in the kitchen. It was a big old barny old kitchen with a door both ends of it. I used to clean that down, I used to get a bucket of water and a broom and swill it from one doorway to the other.

***What was the floor, flagstones on the floor?***

No, bricks, old red bricks.

***What, were the bricks just on the earth?***

Yes. There was a door both ends, was a little bit uphill, down hill going down. Used to chuck it in from the one door, it used to go round and out the other one.

***What about the fire? Was that your job as well?***

No, I never, well I used to get the wood in for lighting the stove and that and in the hall there was a big old open fire you see and used to get some logs about that long and put them on. Roast out that would when that got alight, as much as I could carry.

***Where did the students eat, did they eat in the house?***

Oh yes

***How many would sit down to breakfast in the morning then?***

The students have their breakfast first look, they used to have what adjoining the kitchen, well they all used that, what they call a breakfast room like, see 'cos the students they have to come out to work you see at 7 o'clock when the other men did. They'd have their bit of breakfast you see and then the Governor and the Missus and the kiddies would have theirs afterwards you see.

***What did you have for breakfast?***

Oh, I never had no breakfast.

***No, what did they have for breakfast?***

Well, they used to have chicken and eggs and bacon and that you know, different things. Weren't all these cereals and that what they're getting today.

***Porridge?***

Oh, yes they all had porridge. They had two or three old cows and I used to milk them for the house.

***What sort of cows?***

Shorthorns like

***Did they make their own butter?***

Yes

***Who did that?***

Mr Stovold, and then we used to be allowed to go with the milk and be allowed to get a can full of milk for about tuppence penny, beautiful milk. That was after they skimmed it to make the butter, she used to skim it by hand, wasn't like machines pretty near as much cream left in it as there was took off. Used to do it out in the dairy like. We used to walk from above the Cider House where we lived then to Lydling to get the milk. Then we got up to 6 or 7 cows and I used to milk, all depended what she wanted. If she wanted a good lot I perhaps used to milk two cows, perhaps three. And then we used to have some calves, we used to fat calves with the other look.

***After the war you came from Lydling with your horses down there to Top Street, didn't you?***

Yes. Was where we used to do a lot of our courting in Top Street, while he was racking up the horses we used to do our courting. Yes, well when I come back there, when I first come back you see they'd been short-handed during the war and we used to parade two and three colts every year you see. We got several colts lying about, some of them was getting a bit old. I had seven over there and one old horse. I had to have one old horse to hold them a bit. That's all I done for pretty near a twelve month. I only had them colts at the end of that year. Well, then Guildford ploughing match started, the first one to start after the war like in 1921.

***Where was that?***

At Fairlands Farm, Worplesdon, Mr Johnny Brook's.

***Any relation to Geoffrey Brook?***

His father. Yes and we entered what we used to call old Friday, Arthur Aylward, he entered him for it.

***Who else was it he entered?***

I don't think he entered anybody else. Anyway the day before the match he backed out, he said he didn't want to go. He said I shan't do nothing against them blokes, ask Harry to go. What do you think I could do, I haven't been ploughing for seven years. Oh, I said yes I'll go. He said what are them horses going like, I said I might take two of them young 'uns. He said very risky you know and I said I'll take the risk anyway. I took the two and I got first prize for horses and first prize for ploughing. I was ploughing next to the old Guildford Champion when the ploughing match was before the war.

***Do you remember his name?***

I can't think of his name, he got killed just afterwards. His horse run away at Guildford. He worked at Guildford. I can't think of his name now but I know just before I finished poor old Johnny Brook come along and he turned to him, we were side by side, he said, mate he said, your boy beat today. I did, I beat him fair and square. And they had ploughing matches one after the other after that.

## 15. FACTS & FIGURES

- 1834 ? at Broomleaf  
Frederick Stovold's Dairy or Richard's at Polshot
- 1835 28th January to F. Stovold
- 1835 March to Lord Midleton. Trotters all through book.
- 1837 March. Darvill appears. Looks like 30 qrs trotters £10.10.0
- 1842 17<sup>th</sup> December £30 rent paid to R. Stovold (was he at Polshot)
- 1852 11<sup>th</sup> March Bull to Mr Stovold Tilford.  
Carrots  
40 doz. £6.0.0 Referred to as Gregory & Haynes & Mills (?variety)  
400-500 doz per mont. Did they go to London
- 1842 2 sows to Waverley, Farnhama
- 1849 Paid Darvill for charcoal (was this for Broomleaf)
- 1849 22<sup>nd</sup> December ½ton hay £1.0.0.
- 1852 Trotters to Broomleaf. Tices name appears throughout this time as buying trotters
- 1853 Paid Wm Larbey 4000 turf 8/-
- 1852 6 days wages 9/-, 16 qrs wheat £2.8.9. Average wages 7-9/-  
boys wages 2/- 6 days
- 1850 Planted 7 cares poor ground with larch and scotch fir
- 1845 Weyhill, nr Andover. Bought 200 four tooth sheep £375
- 1844 Broomleaf  
Hoeing 13¾ acres 28 rod. £5.11.6.
- 1844 Reaping by hand 6 acres 2 rodop. £2.15.6.
- 1845 For dibbing wheat 10 acres 2 rod 20 perch @ 6/6 per acre £3.9.1  
Threshing wheat 2/6 per qr. I presume by hand. Wheat hoeing 3/- per acre
- 1847 July by scythe – upland mowing 12 acres @ 2/- per acre £1.4.0  
- meadow mowing 13 acres @ 4/- £2.12.0.
- 1850 1 ton best coals £1.3.6
- 1845 Broomleaf 25 acres wheat 346 bushels ) 32.8.0 per qr.  
396 bushels)  
Barley 763 bushels )  
577 bushels ) about 31/6 per qr
- 1848 Wilton Fair 200 lambs £287.10.0. Driving home 60 miles £1.5.0.
- 1849 Winchester Fair 200 lambs @24/9 £247.10.0 driving home £1.5.0
- 1849 Dec 6 – settled with Mr Stovold rent of Polshott Farm. Due at Michaelmass £30. Size of Broomleaf ?140 acres.
- 1844 Farnham apportional tithes. Rector £19.2.9. Vicar £6.2.9.

## 16. ODDS AND ENDS

[MISSING]

## 17. DAIRY BUSINESS

In 1927 I was selling milk wholesale, produced from three herds at Eashing and Hurtmore, to Mr Hillsdon and his son, who owned the Godalming Dairies. I was paid a premium of 2d per gallon. In negotiating a new contract for 1928, he refused to pay the premium and I told him I would start a retail business. He said there was little fear of that as my father would not allow me to do so. I said I was 21 and could do as I pleased. If it had not been for this disagreement, I may never have entered trade but continued as a full-time farmer, the same as father and Percy.

Once I had accepted the challenge I went bull-headed into it. Immediately I ordered a new milk float from Stevens of Fleet and a new set of harness from Simes of Aldershot. Mr Percy Poulson, the well respected farmer of Tongham and owner of Poulson's Dairies at Aldershot, went to Shrewsbury and purchased me a very showy Welsh cob. I remember the thrill of collecting the turnout from Tongham after Mr Poulson had tried the cob on his rounds. The drive along the Hog's Back caused many stares. I had already ordered milk bottles in quarts, one and a half pints, pints and half pints, engraved with F. R Stovold in red, so that they were distinguishable from others. This was very necessary. There was a milk bottle recovery service to which one paid commission on bottles returned. On one Bank Holiday ten thousand bottles were found on Brighton beach, belonging to all and sundry!

Milk was bottled by hand in a small dairy adjoining the farmhouse. As the round grew we installed a small rotary filler but bottles still had to be capped by hand. Afterwards a very sophisticated machine was purchased which did both bottling and capping. I engaged Baden Etherington who had previously worked for Rothwell's Dairy at Milford. He started bottling the previous day's milk at 3.30 am and after breakfast came back to bottle the morning's milk at 9.00 am. The milk ponies were kept at Eashing and were out of the stables by 5.00 am with harness polished, hooves blacked and looking very smart. They delivered to Godalming and nearby villages between 5.00 and 9.00 am, returning for breakfast. They started again at 10.00 am, making a second delivery to the same people. This was necessary in summer as milk was not pasteurised. The ponies knew the rounds as well as the men and stopped at every house, so if a stranger had to do the round, through illness, the pony would show him the way. They became very fat as people and ....[text missing].

Although ponies often ran away and smashed milk floats, they could at least get round in bad weather, when studs were screwed into their shoes, especially during icy weather. They were less trouble than experienced during the winter of 1979 when problems were caused by diesel freezing, batteries running out of power, etc. Business grew rapidly and it was not long before I had five ponies and floats delivering milk in and around Godalming.

Hillsdon later sold their business, including the dept and bottling plant in Godalming, to Lymposs and Smee, dairymen of Guildofrd. I should have purchased the premises and dairy business. We were both retailing about the same amount of milk as I had bought several rounds from local farmers. I later purchased Hewitt's business, of Tilthams's Farm, Godalming, delivering 200 gallons per day. I had to borrow £2,000 from father. It worried him a great deal as he thought I might lose it through competition. It turned out to be the right move as in 1938, when there were rumours of war, it appeared we might have to rationalise milk distribution. I suggested to Lymposs and Smee we should join to form one company. They owned the premises at 3 Holloway Hill, Godalming, including the bottling plant, and I had the farm dairy. They paid me for the difference in value as I had the Milk Bar in Guildford, shop in Godalming and one in Farncombe Street. Two directors were appointed, A.H. Belcher from Lymposs and Smee, and myself, a satisfactory deal. The new set-up was to be F. R Stovold Limited or Eashing Farm Dairy. This has been adhered to from 1958 to the present day, 1979, when I am proud to see my son, John, as Managing Director and grandson, Peter, appointed Company Manager. Today we are delivering to over 8,000 houses. Although milk is still produced by the Guernsey herd at Eashing Farm, it is collected by bulk tanker

and taken to the Unigate bottling depot in Guildford, from where we collect milk of all grades for distribution.

To advertise the business, I bought a shop in 1928, 90 High Street, Godalming, on the corner of Pound Lane, a most prominent position. It had been a bicycle shop. Baden Etherington's sister, Mrs Barnes, took over the management and made a first rate job. She worked for me from then until she retired in 1956. We were pleased to welcome her at the staff dinner, to celebrate our Golden Jubilee, on 8<sup>th</sup> March 1978, at the Manor Hotel, Farncombe, when she was 84 and still very active. In 1958 we were one of the first to change to a "help yourself" store, a very unfortunate name as people took it literally, since when shops have become known as self service stores or supermarkets. The shop was finally closed in 1963.

In the early 1930's Lymposs and Smee introduced one of the first centrifugal cleaners which they advertised as being able to remove puss, blood, hair and manure from milk. Having recently won many competitions for the best dairy and clean milk, etc., I jumped straight on the band wagon and obtained certification from my vet and medical officer, stating our milk was very clean and had not at any time contained puss, blood, hair or manure! This helped enormously and I gained many customers from Lymposs and Smee. This was good propaganda in the shop window and on rounds, I went straight to Coombs of Guidford and ordered a motor can painted with an arrow pointing through the name and Eashing Farm Dairy stating "Direct from the farm to the consumer, Clean All The Way".

Deciding only to sell good ice cream a the shop I bought recipe from Mrs Allen who gave up her business on the corner of Friary Street and High Street, Guildford, known for excellent ices. As one of her most loyal customers I once went to her shop in a punt! The bottom of the High Street was flooded after the thaw from disastrous snow falls. The Hogs Back was blocked to six feet deep. As there was no refrigeration or storage available, ice cream was made in wooden buckets with a container inside, turned by hand, in which the mixture was put. Salt and ice were put between the bucket and container as a freezing agent. Immediately a gallon was made it was sold for consumption on the premises. At busy times I sent two or three farm men to the shop, each having a bucket, to make it in vanilla, chocolate, coffee and strawberry flavours. It was sold as fast as they could churn it out. The mixture was prepared at the farm by Mrs Stovold and every gallon contained half a gallon of cream. Served fresh, it was a most delicious ice cream and people came for miles to buy it. In each gallon of strawberry mix there was a bottle of French puree, giving the natural colour. One could taste the strawberry! I entered the ice cream section at the Dairy Ice Cream Convention at Olympia in 1936 and won the silver medal for the best ice cream. All the shops were known as Eashing Farm Dairy.

I was asked to pack some to take away. In the early thirties we used the dairy in the house (now our sitting room) for freezing and packing, using only four flavours, vanilla, chocolate, coffee and strawberry. Three women were employed under the supervision of Mrs Stovold who controlled the mixes, packed in pint and half-pint blocks, tubs and choc bars only. The blocks were made in a mould before putting in outer wrappers. The tubs were made in a mould before putting in outer wrappers. The tubs had to be filled by hand. Blocks were cut up with a carving knife to the right size for choc ices. Each piece was dipped into hot chocolate on a toasting fork, prior to being wrapped in tin foil. Quite a slow process as there was a great demand in the Godalming and Farncombe.

In 1935, leaving the Lion Hotel in Guildford one night about 10.30pm I noticed an empty cycle shop, 105½ High Street, just above Quarry Street. This was the year milk bars were opened in this country. I remarked it would be a good place for one. Someone bet me £5 I would not open it: this was another challenge.



The next morning I obtained particulars of the premises and bought the property. This was followed by misgivings as I knew nothing about milk bars and did not have sufficient finance. Having bought the premises I had to do something with them. Two friends, Tony Lucas and Ann Verity (who later married) lent me £1,000 each for one year to help finance the venture. Next came the alterations and decorations. On one long wall I had a mural of a hunting scene with hounds and followers, including daughter Janet on a grey pony with her pigtailed flying. This was done by a student from Guildford Technical College. I purchased complicated equipment necessary for serving ice cream, milk shakes, snacks, etc. The next problem was labour.

I knew to attract people, one needed attractive girls. Staff from the Lion and Angel offered to work for me. Everything was ready for the grand opening. Being the first milk bar in Guildford, the National Milk Publicity Council and others were involved. Sir John Jarvis, M.P for Guildford, performed the opening ceremony in the company of many distinguished guests. When he arrived at the bottom of the High Street he was escorted by police to the premises as the road was so full of people traffic was being diverted. The reason was the premises of Carling, Gill and Carling, the iron-mongers opposite, were on fire and several fire engines were in attendance. We had advertised extensively that after the Milk Bar had been opened, we would give free ice cream for two hours, so one can guess the influx of people, most of whom had been watching the fire.

Opening hours were from 9.00 am until 11.00 pm with “turning out time” at 11.20 pm, thus enabling the very large clientele from the Angel, Lion and other pubs to avail themselves of milk shakes and a snack to sober up. I had engaged two sisters, Eileen and Ivy Bicker, to take charge over six other girls. They lived in the flat over the premises which was very useful, bearing in mind the late night opening. I also purchased premises in Quarry Street as an ice cream parlour as it adjoined the High Street premises.

When I opened I received a letter from the Women’s Temperance Association saying how pleased they were we had provided facilities for young people to enjoy themselves. They begged me, however, to remove the rum shakes from the menu as they thought they would cause many young people on the downward path to drinking! The atmosphere between staff and customers was so friendly and enjoyable. Many well-known characters in the hunting, shooting and fishing world used to frequent the milk car during the evening.

One particular character was Jack Stevens, a very popular member of one of the most respected families in Guildford, wharf owners who operated all the barges from Guildford. He hardly missed a night, after leaving the Lion at 10.00 pm. The girls got so used to him they would order a taxi about 11.00 pm to take him home. On one occasion on an Easter Monday, he was crossing from the Lion to the milk car. With his trilby hat crossways and a mac over his arm he started directing traffic. This was before the Guildford – Godalming bypass was constructed, so all the coast traffic had to use the High Street and Quarry Street. A police officer came rushing up to sort out the chaos. Jack took off his hat and said, “I have done my best, officer, I am sure you’ll be able to sort it out now.” On another occasion in the Lion one evening about 10.00 pm, he said he had to go as he did not want to keep his elephant waiting. People told him he had had too much to drink. He took several bets that he was telling the truth. There was an elephant waiting outside and he duly got on and started riding up Quarry Street. He had hired it from the circus in Shalford Meadows. I think the Council fined him £25 for obstruction and he also had to pay the circus proprietor, so it was an expensive evening but enjoyed by many.

Selecting good looking girls had one draw-back. 1937, being Coronation Year, six of the staff entered a beauty competition and Ivy Bicker, later to marry a detective sergeant in the CID was elected beauty queen. One of the others was a maid of honour. This meant that they were very busy during the year attending official functions. To celebrate the occasion we mounted a complete milk bar on a farm wagon. This was drawn by four Suffolk Punch horses, attended by five carters dressed in top hats and smocks, to take part in the parade. They all came from the farm at Eashing.

Four of the milk bar staff suitably dressed, rode on the wagon to give away ice cream en route. They had an excellent reception all the way, despite the very hard rain throughout the day.

We remained open until 11.00pm until 1942, after which we closed at about 8.00 pm as the girls had difficulty in getting home, especially during air raid warnings. We continued the earlier closing until 1946, when the premises were completely burnt to the ground. An extraordinary coincidence, to open during a fire in the High Street and then to be closed by one!

Returning with Ronnie Slocombe from our point-to-point course at West Horsley, about 4.30 pm on Boxing Day, I suggested going to the milk bar for a cup of tea. We were halfway down the High Street which was crowded and fire engines were in sight. I hoped it was not my premises but it was! The girls had been taken across to the Lion Hotel, suffering from shock, leaving coats, etc., behind in their quick getaway. Some claimed for valuable coats until told we were limited in what we could pay through insurance, which they accepted. One customer wrote a fortnight later saying we owed 2/6d as she was just paying her bill when she had to rush out without collecting the change! The fire was caused by a small tobacco kiosk, not owned by me, in one corner of the premises. The assistant was filling a lighter over an electric fire and the whole lot went up in smoke. Being one of the oldest premises in Guildford High Street, the old walls and timber beams caused a vacuum.

These premises were completely written off but the ice cream parlour in Quarry Street remained undamaged. At the time the manageress lived over these premises. She kindly vacated her rooms on the first floor and moved to the third floor. This enabled us to continue serving a limited number of lunches each day. I eventually purchased in 1948 half of the premises belonging to Frank Oliver, the antiques dealer at 100, High Street, just below Quarry Street. These were much more suitable and had a large area both upstairs and downstairs which enabled us to do snacks downstairs and serve lunches and dinners upstairs. I closed it in 1956, as the rates were increased so much that I refused to keep the restaurant going, in spite of Guildford Council, many of whose Councillors lunched and dined there, objections. We were doing several hundred meals a day and at the end were employing over forty staff with an excellent manager named Durrant. Within a year the Lion, Astolat on the opposite side of the road and Tony's in Upper High Street closed, robbing Guildfordians of hundreds of meals a day. It caused great disappointment among so many and it was a sad day to see the restaurant close in March 1956, after all the effort that had gone into it. The following, written by Miss Diana Pyke of Peaslake, expresses their views:

“Oh, Mr Stovold – how COULD YOU!! I don't know when – quite literally – I have had such as shock as when learnt last Friday that the restaurant was closing down on Thursday of this week! I was later than usual in going to lunch and later heard a rumour – which I simply refused to believe. After I got home I telephoned Mr Durrant early Saturday morning and on receiving his confirmation I simply am too upset for anything!

“I suppose that, at one time and another, I have sampled every “eats-house” in Guildford – and I invariably return to the Eashing. It is no “trying to be nice”, but the plain, unvarnished truth to say that there isn't a place in Guildford to touch you. Although circumstances have forced you to raise your prices, you are still by far the most reasonable restaurant of any in town; nowhere else is the food so beautifully HOT; and nowhere else is the staff – every member of it from Mr Durrant downwards – so outstandingly and consistently friendly, courteous and helpful....”

The sale of ice cream was banned during the war years. We had about half a ton left in the refrigerator in the house when the ban was imposed which we gave to hospitals at Christmas time. After the war it was impossible to meet the demand so I came to an arrangement with C.P Favier of Eldorado Ice Cream to pack for us in our wrapper. This was a particularly good move as we would not have been able to obtain sufficient ingredients to meet the demand for a large variety of flavours.

At the time, we could ring the Eldorado office by 4.00 pm and have ice cream sent over night by rail for delivery first thing the following morning.

The name Eashing Farm Dairy must have rung a bell as we were sending ice cream as far away as Torquay, also Hasting, Brighton and Hove, Worthing, Petwork and Horsham in Sussex, as well as to the Surbiton area and Addlestone, Weybridge, Sunningdale, Cobham, Dorking, Reigate and Leatherhead areas in Surrey. Later the price made it prohibitive to pack in our own wrappers all the very large range on offer by Lyons, Walls and Nielsons, so I accepted Eldorado packaging. This continued until Lyons bought Eldorado, with whom I continue on very favourable terms. Rail deliveries stopped and I had to accept deliveries by road to Eashing, where I had already built a cold store and bought two refrigerated vans for wholesale deliveries to our won shops and many others in Guildford, Godalming.

Additional cold rooms were built at Eashing and further vehicles purchased. Today, 1979, we sell approximately £68,000 ice cream per year, wholesale. As this is a summer trade, I decided in 1953 to distribute frozen foods from other suppliers as well, to keep the cold stores going during the winter. Gradually a very fine business built up which now amounts to approximately £276,000 wholesale annually. This is apart from the milk distribution side of F. R. Stovold Limited which is expected to reach a sales figure of £756,000 for milk and £124,000 for goods, for the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 1979. The wages bill for the company as a whole is expected to reach a figure of £210,300.

## 18. YACHTING

Although very fond of the sea, I had little opportunity of actually sailing until I met my future wife, Mary Simpson, in 1921. Her father, William Simpson, and his brother always had a boat on the river and one moored at Itchenor. In those days one could count the boats on one hand, whereas since the war, it has become one of the busiest harbours on the South Coast and very difficult to find moorings. The boat I remember was converted from a lifeboat so it was very seaworthy. It could sleep two "farrard" and two in the cockpit. Although I never stayed a night on board we had many Saturdays or Sundays cruising about mackerel spinning, etc.

It was not until 1945 I again had the opportunity of enjoying the sea. About 1942, a friend, Percy Trower, started farming at Tangle Place Farm, Worplesdon, which had a good herd of Guernsey cattle. Although new to farming, he really became obsessed with the Guernsey breed. He read and studied pedigrees in every herd book and became a very successful breeder.

Before the war Percy owned a motor yacht, Moiena. This was a J.A Silver boat, designed by John Bain and built at Rosneath in 1934, overall length 54 ft and powered by two Gardner diesels. Built for Lord Weir's son she was well appointed, a double cabin aft, three singles, bathroom and lavatory and an excellent wheelhouse down to a good saloon and galley, with two bunks forward, lavatory, etc., for the crew. Requisitioned by the Admiralty at the outbreak of war, she had a gun mounted aft and was reputed to have brought down a Dornier when used as a patrol boat. At the end of 1945, Trower was offered the Moiena back and I joined him in the purchase. It was a reasonable price as there had been so many alterations made for wartime service. This suited Trower as there was nothing he liked better than re-fitting boats. She was taken to Sunbury on Thames where he spent a lot of time restoring her to her former elegance. He always knew where to put his hands on teak, brass or any other fittings he needed, under the "old pals act".

When the re-fit was complete we took her to London and tied up by Chelsea Bridge. This was an enjoyable trip. She was there about two days as it was not permissible to use the bridge as a mooring. We then took her to Ramsgate and had to leave before dawn to catch low tide to get under the eight Thames bridges without having to lower the navigation mast. This was a great experience, to sail down the Thames with London just beginning to wake up. We arrived at Ramsgate without mishap. There was great excitement among the local population as she was one of the first boats to go into Ramsgate after the war and there was a report in the paper about "Moiena" having brought down a Dornier. Later on we moved to Dover Harbour.

The distance from Guildford to Dover about 98 miles, was too far to travel for a day or weekend, so we decided to take her to Littlehampton. Again we had to wait for the tide and decided to leave Dover at midnight. There were three of us on board, a friend of Percy's from the Isle of Wight, Monty Thomas who was an exceptional mechanic and Horace Guerrier. After spending the evening on a local restaurant eating steaks and drinking too much we sailed at midnight. We should never have gone. When we got into the Channel there was a one in eight gale blowing. The first lesson I learnt was the necessity of proper stowing of crockery, etc. The first two or three high waves scattered everything in the galley and everywhere else. It was very dark and a very rough journey. As dawn was breaking we thought we were passing Beachy head. To our dismay, it was the white cliffs of Dover! We had made very little headway during the night owing to head winds and engine trouble. One engine kept packing up. Each time Monty went down to the engine room to put it right he came back on deck and was very seasick. We eventually reached Littlehampton late in the day where Trower was anxiously waiting for us. This was a better harbour as it was more accessible to the Isle of Wight and for tripe in the Solent. I later engaged a paid hand named Dick. It was not until many months after that we discovered he was a naval deserter, hence the meat coupons he was able to obtain! On one trip to the Isle of Wight we had an RAF pilot on board. On returning to Littlehampton he took the helm and thought he was piloting a plane. We steered a direct line instead of going to the Nab lighthouse and following buoys. He must have cleared rocks

by inches as well as getting caught up in lobster pots. It was only the alert mind of Monty telling him to put the b..... thing into reverse that got us out of trouble. We were just spinning round and round with everyone apprehensive of what might happen. My consolation was that we were in sight of the Selsey Lifeboat Station! My wife and daughter Janet, aged about 12, were with us and were naturally very upset at the time.

The first long trip I made was in July 1946, "The July Cruise Foreign of M.Y Moiena", Captain F.R Stovold: Log kept by R. Bellerby, a friend of mine and member of crew.

#### Friday 12.7.46

Arrived by road at Littlehampton and stowed stores in preparation of early start on the morrow. One cryptic, eyeing the stores, remarked was it a cruise or a booze? Weather forecast good and every prospect of an uneventful crossing.

#### Saturday 13.7.46

Turned out early, weather promising fair. Breakfast and cast off 0930 hrs. 1000 hrs, sea proved choppy out of river mouth and one or two very violent rolls proved that the stowing of stores and gear had been done in the proper manner. Nothing moved out of place except one important article of gear, the nature of which if divulged would discredit the ship's company! 1200 hrs. Sea smoothed out considerably and Moiena behaving like a lamb. Saw plenty of channel traffic but one sailing boat only. Our course on the compass was S.6W. 1400 hrs, weather cloudy, sandwich lunch, rain showers, 1830 hrs, expected to sight land by this time but visibility obviously bad or we were on the wrong course. Some excitement on sighting a drifting mine, well and truly barnacle covered. We approached as close as we dare to have a good look and decided any night trips would be ruled out. 1915 hrs, French submarine on starboard quarter. Gussed she was making fir Le Havre. Decided to follow her as we had expected to sight land by this time and still no sign. The tide had taken us off our course a little. 1930 hrs, sighted a marker buoy spotted H.V.1. Obviously meant for Le Havre. Some encouragement and everyone looking for another buoy. 2000 hrs, another marker buoy spotted H½V.2. Still following the French submarine. Should be glad to see Le Havre lightship. 2030 hrs, sighted the lightship and altered course again, more S.E. 2115 hrs, picked up leading lights for Le Havre, into lighted channel, plenty of markers now. 2200 hrs, entered harbour, into inner harbour and tied up alongside one of our landing craft. 2245 hrs, had a good, hot, late dinner and afterwards went ashore. The town of Le Havre was badly knocked about. Rubble and ruin everywhere along waterfront. No customs, no dock dages, just walked ashore, entered town just opposite town hall. Not many people about but several American army trucks galloping about. Found a café, beer very poor and cheap, 10 frs a glass, cognac 30 frs, champagne 55 frs. Tried several cafes but found no good beer, cognac was not good either. Soon discovered that every inhabitant was gathered in central square, singing, dancing, letting off fireworks and a band playing on a platform where amateur artistes were having a singing competition. Very mixed reception. The whole town seemed to be out. Infants in arms, toddlers, even at 12.30 am. All cafes seemed to be very busy with their odd tasting beer, it was off the ice the night being warm, it was in great demand. Swings, roundabouts and all the fun of the fair, stragglng up the main street. Absolute bedlam with an atmosphere of anything could happen at any minute. These celebrations were of course a prelude to France's National Holiday, Bastille Day, 14<sup>th</sup> July. It was a brave show at gaiety for the poverty was very apparent, physical, mental and financial. Returned to ship 0100 hrs.

#### Sunday 14.7.46

0800 hrs, got up, breakfasted and cast off for Rouen via the canal to the Seine. Weather dull with a strong N.W wind. For too many bridges in the harbour and on the canals. Left Le Haves 1430 hrs. 1500 hrs, weather now fine and warm. Canal very beautiful. Final look at Tancerville 1600 hrs. Had to wait till 2015 hrs for the lock to open. Went ashore for a walk round. Very little town here. Mostly bungalows and chalets, not many people about. Some war damage around canal entrance. The Seine looked very wide after the confines of the canal. Several wrecks lying along the Seine

banks, jetties badly damaged too. 2115 hrs, through the lock and into the Seine to catch the flood tide. Made excellent progress here. The shore to port was low and not very interesting but to starboard there was high ground which was tree covered and pleasant to watch. The moon rose and made the setting very attractive. Very little traffic on the water, not even commercial, seems deserted. Hoping to find somewhere to tie up for the night. 2115 hrs, spotted a small village where 14<sup>th</sup> July celebrations evident. Looked out for a suitable mooring but no luck and continued upstream. 2245 hrs, sighted another village, river tug lying alongside. Tied up to her and decided to stay there the night.

2315 hrs, went ashore to see the celebration, dancing in the street to a five piece band. They have a peculiar step, mark time twice, lift left foot and shake your bottom, mark time twice again, lift right foot and more bottom shaking and so on ad lib. The fold seem very poor but as this town or village is in the country, it is to be expected. The going for the dancers was pretty tough. Gravel on battered tar macadam. Band played a rhumba and a tango, more like home. All the world and his wife were there. Discovered the name of the place was Caudebec which had been very badly blitzed. All the shore front to the river was in ruins and small temporary church apparently intact. One felt a little guilty at seeing so much damage presumably caused by our bombs. Bought some peaches at 45 frs a kilo, not too bad, about 2 lbs for 1/10d. 2400 hrs, returned to Moiena and learnt from tug skipper he was off at 0600 hrs. We also decided to make an early start.

#### Monday 15.7.46

0545 hrs, awoke to the voice of the tug skipper shouting something like “Nous sommes allons”. Can’t remember much French but decided he was “going!” All hands let go and we headed up the river. I already had the kettle on.

0600 hrs, what a beautiful morning; going up against the last of the ebb tide. Countryside very pleasant, but little sign of life, seems to be a fruit growing district with plenty of orchards but dwelling very scattered. Practically no river traffic, the sides littered with tangled wrecks of river craft and barges, presumably the results of enemy attack, possibly from the air. The Mosquito raids perhaps? What price victory?

1000 hrs, just passed Duclair which is the first semblance of a town worthy of the name. River continues fairly wide, about 200 yards at a guess. Just been thinking we have come across Channel, through harbours, canals and rivers all of a foreign country and no one seems to want to know who we are or where we are going. Why haven’t we a load of contraband on board? There was a customs house at Tancerville but no search or enquiries. 1100 hrs, into outlying Rouen. River well lined with barges, tugs and odd craft. Hundreds of barges and big ones too. River spanned by an iron bridge which looks like a military ‘makedo’. Obviously can’t go further so tied up on north bank 1300 hrs. 1430 hrs, having lunched aboard, strolled ashore and soon learned that it is still a National Holiday. No shops open except the inevitable café. Rouen seems badly hit. Damage, debris and dereliction everywhere. It is difficult to find even a short street that has not suffered in some way. Residents attribute this damage to American bombers. I suspect that when talking to Americans this destruction is attributed to English bombers. We walked nearly a mile from the river but found little to impress us. Poverty very prevalent and the endless ruins very depressing, much dust flying about from the rubble heaped everywhere. Shops are very provincial, prices of clothes and footwear comparable with our own but not the quality. Children seem to be having sports in the streets, a lot of excitement. 1630 hrs, returned to ship.

2130 hrs, ashore again to see what else is going on other than dancing in the streets, little excitement. A small fair in the market place, poor stuff. S’pose they have to dance in the street as I have not seen any dance halls, I wasn’t really looking of course. Two different cinemas. Found a bar eventually which advertised itself as an American bar. It left little to be desired for quiet drinking. Most of the customers seemed to be American soldiers in civvies, with companions. No whisky – had champagne at 60 francs, very good too. The decorations of the place were very good, obviously new. Light oak panelling, tables to match, with upholstered stools and high-backed

chairs, very nice. Having had several champagnes, returned aboard. The water has gone down and I had the onerous privilege of clambering down the wire mooring rope to the first barge and submitting my shoulder as a half way step for the others.

#### Tuesday 16.7.46

0700 hrs, awoke to foul weather, rain and wind. Conversation aboard reminds me that we have yet to see cigarettes or tobacco on sale. Perhaps tobacco and cigarettes are rationed or don't exist off the black market. 1030 hrs, went ashore for shopping. Good supply of fruit and vegetables, cherries, raspberries, melons, etc, plenty of perfumes about. The town seemed very busy and the open shops gave the town a very different aspect today as compared to be on points. Bread is rationed but managed to get a very large loaf for 12 francs, off the ration. Makes our large loaf look like a breakfast roll. Received civility and courtesy everywhere, it's our money they are after! Bright periods and occasional rain. Lunched on board.

1545 hrs, cast off and headed downstream for Caudebec. Should be there about 2200 hrs. Weather much brighter and the idle members of the crew enjoy the passage down river, sunning themselves in deckchairs and everyone eating far too many cherries. 1730 hrs, passed our French submarine friend whom we met in the Channel on Sunday, presumably making for Rouen. Turned cold again now and driven everyone to the wheelhouse or below. It's driven Ray to the galley and the spuds for the evening meal and the author to these notes. The scenery described when coming up still attracts us and it is very easy just doing nothing but watching. 2000 hrs, making very good progress so have decided to keep cracking down river. Very dull and slight drizzle. Some light diversion caused at this stage by trailing the beer and cider overboard in a sandbag for cooling. The speed of the boat would not allow the bottles to sink but kept them planing on the surface. It occurred to us that the shaking would be liable to blow the corks. Pulled the sack inboard and sure enough the cork required no pulling. On releasing the wire fastener, out shot the cork closely followed by the cider. 2200 hrs, visibility very poor now, sighted the entrance to the Tancerville canal and looked for a possible mooring. The best appeared to be alongside two lime works barges. Made fast with a roaring flood tide.

#### Wednesday 17.7.46

0400 hrs, everyone awakened by a loud report and being asleep it was difficult to say what had actually happened. The author thought the worst, viz, the mooring ropes had parted and we were adrift. Examination dispelled any fears in this direction, concluded our head rope had fouled something and as the vessel pulled away on the rising tide the fouled rope was suddenly freed and so caused the loud SNAP. Further anxiety was caused now by the sound of a regular drip, drip or click, click, sounded like water coming in somewhere. After several guesses, the prop shaft was examined and found to be turning, due to the flood tide. Put the shaft in gear and that cured that, for this relief much thanks. To bed again.

0815 hrs, passing Le Havre, weather and tide foul. Buoys marking channel are opposed to the channel pilot. 1045 hrs, sighted Trouville. Weather now brighter, sea calm. Deauville sighted, much traffic about this area. 1200 hrs, tied up alongside the fish market after some trouble in finding the very narrow entrance to the harbour, passed it once. 1245 hrs, enter the harbour master. Apparently we are tied up in the wrong place, moved to inner basin. Everywhere dries out at low water.

1500 hrs, went ashore at Deauville and went to the beach, bathed. Bit cold but well worth the effort. Plenty of belles about, miles of sand and a very good beach for bathing. Had tea, without milk, small piece of cake, bill 260 francs. Thought I had leased the place for the season! Walked through the town and were very impressed by the exclusive luxury articles so very well displayed. A Mecca for the wealthy tourist. Everything seems very expensive but certainly not of the best. Returned aboard and made ready for dinner ashore.

1930 hrs, ashore and had dinner at the Casino Grill Room. About 16s. per head, plus coffee, plus service, plus tax, plus wine, plus commission, plus tax on changing English money. Retired to the tables and played the ballgame, we all lost. The casino is very well appointed and the height of Tags Island luxury. Returned aboard Thursday morning!

#### Thursday 18.7.46

Went ashore and wandered round the town of Trouville. Not quite so expensive as Deauville. Had lunch aboard. Bought a wonderful piece of beef, had not seen the like for many years. In the afternoon went by taxi to Caen. The driver decided to have forty winks en route and very nearly capsized the outfit. We all felt about five years older very suddenly. I exercised my limit of French at Caen and told him if he wanted to sleep he had better get in the back. At Caen there was ruin and desolation everywhere, very depressing. Vast open spaces piled high with rubble and debris. Much worse than anything we had seen at Rouen or Le Havre. Back to the boat at 1830 hrs. Ashore again for dinner. But not British restaurant prices, very good but very dear. Further disastrous trip to the casino, why do we go back again? Why does anyone go back again? On board at midnight.

#### Friday 19.7.46

Shopping expedition again in the morning, continued in the afternoon. Dinner ashore and more casino.

#### Saturday 20.7.46

Made a few last minute purchases during the morning and prepared the Moiena for crossing to Le Havre in the afternoon. The weather has been cool but fairly dry. Too cold for going on the beach. 1330 hrs, cast off at high water for Le Havre, sea moderate, wind N.W, bright periods. 1730 hrs, turned now towards Le Havre. Eventually tied up in the inner harbour. Alongside some salvage vessels. It was refreshing to be hailed by someone from North of the Tweed. We were warned off our first selected mooring, not enough water. Went ashore in the evening but found little to interest us, very quiet and scarcely anyone about. Strange for a Saturday morning (?)

#### Sunday 21.7.46

Cast off 0800 hrs, weather dull, wind moderate, sea choppy. Short waves but giving the Moiena a very rapid motion, this continued all day. The Moiena continued to roll and made moving about very tricky. Little hopes of getting an organised meal, even for those who were interested. I found biscuits and jam during the morning, bread and jam later and the paid hand contrived to make tea about four o'clock. A very good effort as it was necessary to stand and hold the kettle on the stove. The sun went during the afternoon and turning much colder we were glad of the shelter of the wheelhouse. Plenty of traffic about in the morning. This is the Le Havre traffic presumably. In the afternoon we seemed to be all alone. It was 1700 hours before we sighted land and mistaking this for the Isle of Wight we altered course. How wrong we were for the next familiar landmark was Beachy head. Our original course had been very true for it was obviously Worthing we had seen. There is a moral here somewhere.

2030 hrs, tied up in Littlehampton feeling very tired. Had a meal and turned in ready for an early getaway in the morning. Seemed a long time since we had seen Littlehampton and all agreed the trip had been successful. Should have been longer, of course. We will see to that next time. Thanks to one and all.

The Moiena was later sold to Mrs Sears, of the show manufacturing company, as Percy decided he would like another yacht to renovate. He enjoyed doing this more than sailing them. The silver Fox was purchased from the Admiralty. It had been used as a fire tender, on the Thames, during the war. She had been stripped of everything but this was a challenge to Percy, who once again made a beautiful boat. She was larger than the Moiena, 72 ft overall length, built at Rosneath by Silver and designed by John Bain, powered by twin Gardner diesels.



Moiena was eventually purchased by John Marriner of Jersey in 1957 and renamed "September Tide". His first trip was up the Seine in 1957, about which he published a book "Afloat in Europe" with many good photographs. He wrote many books about her, including "Mariner in the Mediterranean", "Down the Danube and Around Mount Athos" and "Istanbul to Russian and Back". He presented me with "Afloat in Europe" and "Mariner in the Mediterranean" in 1968, in which he wrote the following: "For Raymond Stovold with whom – through "Moiena" and "September Tide" I have so much in common" and "Another one for Raymond Stovold whose shadow now goes with me still further". He gave me "Black Sea and Blue River", a film of which was shown on BBC television in 1968, as well as articles in the yachting press.

The first long trip we took in the "Silver Fox" was to the Dutch canals. It was tiring as so many bridges had to be raised on route. Percy never really enjoyed sea trips so he flew to Amsterdam and travelled the canals with us. He liked to take the helm now and again but it was too boring so I was the "dogsbody" but enjoyed being so. He took over once in Holland and got into shallow water as the tide was going out. We had to wait to refloat. What annoyed Percy was not only the boredom of waiting but the boys and girls who waded and had a good laugh which we rewarded with sweets. This was a very enjoyable trip. One incident which caused amusement in Rotterdam was when we took on ship's stores. At the time I was a pipe smoker and smoked more matches than tobacco, so Percy ordered a gross of matches. I saw piles of matches stacked up on deck which, fortunately, we were able to get taken back. The supplier must have thought we were an ocean going liner as instead of sending 144 packets as ordered, we received 20,737 packets, in fact a gross of gross! We eventually sailed to the Hague for the retune trip.

Percy returned to England by air with the engineer, Vic, as it was too rough to bring the ship back and his leave was up. Vic flew out at the weekend as we thought the weather had improved. I remained on board for two or three days. As Vic only had the weekend, we decided we must put to sea. It was still rough. I spent hours in the wheelhouse battling against the elements. It was the most lonely trip I have made because during the darkness there were no lights anywhere and I just did not know where we were. It was too dangerous to turn back. Waves kept lifting the bows out of the water and thumping them down again. I thought they would eventually cave in. After a long night the seas began to calm. Percy spent several hours with the coastguards asking if they could find out where we were. Their opinion was that we would not make it as the seas were too rough. Eventually we arrived just after midnight at Ramsgate ablaze with red, green and all colours of light which made it difficult to pick out the navigation buoys. Trower was waiting for us. We had to wait for the customs men to come aboard. When asked what we had to declare I said I would see what they were going to drink before we declared anything! Having spent about two hours with us the number of bottles was reduced. They were quite affable. Percy had taken some off before they arrived! This was about the time another yacht came into Ramsgate and the owner became abusive to the customs men. He said he had nothing to declare as everything was sealed and he was going to sea again. Eventually, however, the goods were taken off and the owner was brought back from abroad and justice was done. It is very important to keep on the right side of officers of the law. After all, they are only doing their job.

The Silver Fox was moved to the Hamble which was not as crowded as today. Many trips were made to the Isle of Wight and she was moored at Bembridge for quite a time. It was difficult harbour to negotiate owing to the short time when there was enough water over the sand bar. Eventually Percy sold Silver Fox and bought another Silver boat, Tahiti, built in Silver's yard at Rosneath, again designed by John Bain. This was during the late fifties. He fitted this out in a siding at Bembridge but before she could be put into full use was sold after this death in 1964.

## 19. Extracts from ‘A Convenient Proportion of Wages’

### C.S Smith takes a look at 600 years of agricultural wages

From the yelpings and howlings that the trades unions set up when wage freezes are mooted, one would imagine that wage control was something new. It isn't. In this country it's at least 600 years old, in agriculture at any rate. The trouble about farming is that what it produces is basic, fundamental and vital. It must be available to the people at prices they can afford to pay. The best way to make sure of this was to control wages with a flat rate of pay.

Agricultural wages boards still argue about payment for the special skills of farm workers, in 17<sup>th</sup> century England they fixed rates for those skills. If you disobeyed their dictum you could be fined, put in stocks or pillories, imprisoned, outlawed or even branded. Like all major changes in farming, this started after a national emergency. Not a war as in our days, but the Black Death of 1348-49. That devastating plague, compared with which our recent 'flu epidemic as a fleabite, killed nearly half the population of England and Wales. When the great landlords found there was nobody left to cultivate their land, they had to come to terms. Serfs became free labourers, demanding panic wages. Many a man was able to commute the labour service he owed to his lord for a halfpenny and then demand three pence for doing the same job as a hired man. Those who occupied land in return for service on the lord's holding were able to commute this too, and pay a rent in cash instead. So began the landlord-tenant system.

It was because of this that the first attempt to control farm wages, and through them the price of farm produce, came into being. This was the Statute of Labourers passed by Edward III in 1349. Wages were fixed at 1346 (pre plague) level. They were bound not to accept higher wages, but neither must the employers pay less. In about 1562, Elizabeth passed a consolidating Act. Despite the splendid archaic language, the reasons given awake echoes of just the same sort of argument that we hear today. "There is good hope that it will come to pass the same law should banish idleness, advance husbandry and yield unto the hired person both in the time of scarcity and in the time of plenty a convenient proportion of wages." Those giving more wages, "by secret ways or meanes or other commodity" were liable to 10 days in gaol and a fine of £5. Those who accepted higher wages could go to gaol for 21 days.

Pay varied from one county to another. They were to "regulate wages according to the plenty or scarcity of the time. One roll tells how the wages of farm workers – by the day, the "years," and what we would now call "piece rates," were fixed in 1655. "In rateing the wages for artificers, labourers, servants, apprentices, workmen and workwomen..."

This is what they fixed:

"By the years for husbandry

A bailiff of husbandry shall not take by the year above £5.

A chieffe shepprd which keepeth five thousand sheep and above: £5

A shepprd which keepeth six hundred sheep: £3 6s 8d.

A chiefe hinde of husbandry shall not take wages above £4

A chiefe carter of husbandry shall not take wages above £4

A common servant of husbandry and a common shepprd above the age of one and twenty years shall not take of wages by the year above £3.

And all other servants and shepprds under one and twenty yeares and above 16 years shall not take of wages above £2."

The list went on to give "wages by the day for the labourers in harvest end at all times of the yeare for husbandry":

Mowers of grasse by the day with meate and drinke shall not take above 8d.

And without meate and drinke 16d

Men labourers in haymaking and griping for lent corn with meate and drinke 6d.

Without meate and drinke 10d

Every hedger, ditcher, thresher and other like labourer in husbandry not afore named from mich: to Or Lady Day with meate and drinke 3d.

And without meate and drinke at the Eleccion of the Heirer 7d.

And from Or lady Day to Mich with meate and drinke 4d.

And without meate and drinke at the Eleccion of the heirer 8d.

Piece rates were fixed “without meate and drinke” for every acre “by the Lugge”. Thus by reaping and binding wheat, rye and beans the pay was 3d, for barley 7d, and oats 6d. For hacking or hawning pease or ffatches (vetches) 14d, and for mowing grass or haymaking 12d. Threshing wheat or rye was paid for by the quarter and the rate was 14d. Threshing peas, barley or vetches was worth 10d (by the quarter) and barley and oats 6d.

For ditching, planting and hedging of a perch containing 16 ft and a half at length, 3 ft in depth and five foot in breadth in gravel and stony ground and setting the same with two chase of plants and making of the hedge, for every perch not above 6d.

For ditching and planting and hedging after the same manner in sandy ground or other easy ground by the lugge of the like measure not above 8d. For making of hedges on a Bancke for every perch not above 1d. And in plain ground not above 2d.

For making of plished (plashed) hedge and other fenced hedge more strong and scowrings of the ditch, for every petch not above 3d. For reyling with double Rayeles with felling and cleaving of Tomber, digging of holes for posts, for every perch not above 8d.

Sine then, of course, though farm wages are fixed in a more democratic fashion they are still controlled. The great thing is, however, that authority now fixed a minimum wage, for a given number of hours. Hours worked were simply not considered by the justices of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and their wage rate was a flat one. You paid that figure or else.

Letter to the Editor, 'HORSE & HOUND', published 23.2.79

“Those were the days!”

Sir – in the process of looking up my family history from the 13<sup>th</sup> century, while looking through documents I came across the following, relating to 1492 expenses :-

“Charge of saddle-horses: profleobotimacione, 4d; new saddle, 2s; four pairs of Stiropp ladders, 1s 7d; 6 reyns, 8d; 4 crowps, 11d; 2 cingul, 10d; 1 great coler of Hungary leather, 6d; two headstalls of black leather, 8d; total, £1 8s 10½d.”

I wonder if any of your readers could let me know what “profleobotimacione” meant?”

F. Raymond Stovold  
Godalming, Surrey

A telephone call was received later in the day, 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1979, from a woman in the Haywards Heath area to say her vet had informed her that “profleobotimacione” meant bloodletting. She subsequently wrote to Horse & Hound and the following was pulished 2.3.79:

“profleobotimacione”

Sir – in answer to Mr Stovold’s enquiry (February 23) about the meaning of “profleobotimacione”, I believe that this means that the horse(s) have been bled (see Revised Mediaeval Latin Word List by Latham, pub. 1965).

I should be most interested to learn if readers have any other suggestions.

Ann Corbishley (Miss)  
Haywards Heath, Sussex

A letter was also received from John Hicks, MRCVS, The Gatehouse, Lower Beeding, Horsham, Sussex, dated 25<sup>th</sup> February 1979:

Dear Mr Stovold,

Re your letter in this weeks H&H I suggest the word refers to bleeding – Phlebotomy – “act of bleeding” (fle-bot’o-mi- as per dictionary pronunciation) Pro – presumably for – i.e. a service. The Latin suggests a medical connection. Hence “for phlebotimation” – a treatment more worthy of the farrier’s fee than mere bloodletting. The professions still “blend with science”!  
Anyway I thank you for an interesting letter in a page of dreary complaint.

Your sincerely – John Hicks

Reply to Mr Stovold’s letter of 23.2.79 published in the 16<sup>th</sup> March 1979 issue of Horse & Hounds.

“Blood-letting”

Sir – I was interested to read Mr Raymond Stovold’s letter (February 23) about prices of saddlery in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

I think the answer to his question is that the charge of 4d “profleobotimacione” was for bleeding (phlebotomy), a popular remedy of the period for a variety of ailments, of men as well as horses. A

farrier would carry an instrument called a fleam, with a number of blades of various sizes, to make the necessary incision.

There are a number of pubs in the country with the name "The Bleeding Horse", which commemorate the practice.

C.G.D Glass  
Newbury, Berks.

Christmases at Lydling were renowned for hospitality, as described by the Editor of the Assam Review who, with his wife spent an enjoyable Christmas 1937 with father and mother:

"The first night was spent in using up two carts loads of holly to decorate the famous old Elizabethan Hall with its traditional old open fireplace; the Yule log blazing its cheerful welcome, as ever, its let in corner seats, made for quiet observation and meditation. A monster Christmas tree took up one complete corner of the hall: heavy with gifts and twinkling little lights.

"Christmas morning commenced with the house party's visit to the wonderful, old, unspoilt Norman Church (no electric lights), on Lord Midelton's beautiful Peper Harow estate nearby. The famous host and hostess of this wonderful old home entertained in their usual hospitable manner and a party of seventeen sat down to the most wonderful of Christmas dinners. A monster turkey and an outsize in puddings, complete with the Christmas fillings, duly disappeared and the day's revels commenced."

The editor distinguished himself by officiating as Father Christmas: complete with scarlet cloak and whiskers, he did so well all the village children requested him to come again next year. In the afternoon the party swelled to thirty six and by the time the Christmas tree was emptied the editor lost count completely. The usual Boxing Day meet of the Chiddingfold Hunt was held on Hindhead but the foggy weather spoilt a perfectly good day's sport and damped most of the youngsters' spirits.

The editor had spent Christmas in Sydney, New Zealand, Tasmania, Melbourne, Perth (Australia), India, Las Palmas, South Africa, at sea, Paris, London and in Scotland but from his vivid description of Christmas in the village of Shackelford, six miles from Guildford, he wondered if he had ever spent Christmas at all.

## THE HISTORY OF THE SURREY COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

By F. RAYMOND STOVOLD, ESQ.

I thought it should be put on record how this Society began. During the nineteenth century nearly every district had its local ploughing match and competition for farmers and their employees, such as hedging, ditching, thatching and anything else to do with the land. These were prevalent until 1914-18 war when many of them died a natural death. Others decided to carry on with their ploughing matches and farm competitions increasing their activities to cover horses, cattle, etc., in fact, many of the county shows had their origins in this way. When the 1939-45 war came, again activities ceased and it was quite a time before some of the societies got going again.

I only intend to deal with two such societies which formed the basis of the present Surrey County Agricultural Society. The first of these was the Surrey Agricultural Association formed in 1829. The second was the Redhill Agricultural Society founded in 1862. After the 1939-45 war both societies were struggling and wondering how they were going to carry on as they had no money in the kitty. The backbone of the Redhill Society was Mr W. T. Barton who did so much as President and Chairman to keep the Society in being. Things became so desperate that a meeting was held at the White Hart Hotel, Dorking on September 7<sup>th</sup>, 1953 to consider the future of the Society. The money they had in the bank at the time was £39.13s.4d which was quite insufficient to stage a show, especially as the secretary, Mr Chiles (senior) was ill at the time, and they could not find a suitable site to have a show.

It was generally agreed that owing to the circumstances and the difficulty of finding a site the Society should be wound up and as only four members were present it was proposed that a special general meeting be called on Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> October at 7.00 pm for this purpose.

I went to this meeting as a Vice President of the Society. There were few members present as there was little interest. I know it was wrong for it to be wound up, especially as the Surrey Agricultural Association was in the same position. I put a proposition to them that I would run a joint show of the two Societies, in my park at Eashing in 1954, and be responsible for doing the work with voluntary help from the Committee members and our own farm men. It was agreed to try this for one year. I suggested that if it was a success a combined show be held during 1955, in Eashing Park again, with a view to amalgamating the two Societies. They made me President of these two shows. Although we did not make much money, both shows were a success. It was decided that we should call a special meeting of the two Societies to see if we could amalgamate. On September 20<sup>th</sup>, 1955 an inaugural meeting was called with the idea of combining the two Societies under the name of The Surrey County Agricultural Society. Mr W.T Barton took the chair. In the end it was agreed that rather than wind up either Society we should amalgamate. Mr Barton was elected President of the new Society. On 1<sup>st</sup> November the first council meeting took place at the White hart, Dorking, thus starting the Society, eventually.

The trouble was that the Society was biased towards the Redhill and Reigate District, being the centre of Surrey. Besides the President, Mr Barton, the majority of the Committee was formed of East Surrey Members, i.e F. Swannack, H.R Fortescue, T. Dibble, G. Russell, R.A Little, R. Vernon Barker, Major M.B Stacey, Col. F.W Pay, T. Jones, C.T. Pritchard, F.C House, S.J Compton, R.F Kent, Dr A.C Nicol, D. Blake and others. With this predominance of members from East Surrey and so few from West Surrey it was very difficult to make them change from holding shows in that district. Sometimes they were held on a Saturday and sometimes on a Monday.

The first show of the new Society was held at Gatton Park, Reigate in 1956 with Mr Barton as President. There was no show in 1957 as the late Royal Counties Agricultural Society held a show in Stoke Park, Guildford, so our Society joined with them on this occasion. In 1958 the show was again held at Gatton Park and in 1959 and 1960 at Crossways Farm, Reigate Hill. Neither of these

shows were very successful, partly due to inaccessibility and partly due to the weather. I could see that the continuation of shows in this area would in the end prove unsatisfactory.

As I knew many of the former Majors and members of the Corporation of Guildford, I approached them with a view to holding a show on Whit Monday in Stoke Park, Guildford in 1961. I took the opportunity of sending a memorandum to members of the Council of the Surrey County Agricultural Society regarding the show, pointing out that it would be a much better venue especially being on spring Bank Holiday when people had very little to do. I set out figures to prove my point and opposed the idea of holding a two day show instead of the one day on Whit Monday. They let me proceed with this idea, with the blessing of the Corporation of Guildford. I said I would foot the bill should the Society make a loss during its first year. The Secretary, Mr John Chiles, wrote a memorandum to members of the Council regarding my suggestion. He started by saying "I have taken the liberty of sending out this memorandum as I feel that possibly I, as Secretary, am in a position to feel the pulse of the Society better than anyone". He then went on to point out that not only would Guildford be the worst possible site to hold a show, but to hold a show on a Whit Monday would be disastrous. He ended by saying "my conclusion, on chewing all the over for a reasonable time, is that we have nothing to gain at all by changing the date of the 1961 show to Whit Monday, but that we stand to lose a lot that we have built over the last two years. I think that it has proved this year (1960), in spite of the poor weather conditions, that we can get a good attendance by sticking to the third Saturday in May instead of Whit Monday. I would therefore submit for your careful consideration that we stick to the Saturday in 1961 and also that you consider holding the show on the previous Friday as well, i.e a two day show." This was a very long two page memo, which is much too long to put on paper, but he was so dead against it that I felt there was a slur on what I was trying to do for the Society. I enclose a copy of my memorandum in reply as unfortunately it was being discussed on a date when I was away judging at the Great Yorkshire Show in Harrogate so I could not answer any of the Secretary's criticisms. Luckily I had my way and the show was duly held on Whit Monday at Guildford in 1961. It was a great success and through our good relations with the Corporation of Guildford we have had the show there ever since although the day has now changed from Whit Monday to the Spring Bank Holiday. We have given pleasure to many thousands of people not only from Guildford, but from the surrounding districts.

We have always put on a first class ring entertainment and I have listed here some of them as an interesting reference:-

#### SEE LIST ATTACHED

Although we do not pay for the park we have spent over £20,000 on improving roads, installing sewerage for flush lavatories, planting trees, including the renovation of the Jubilee Wood during the time that Her Majesty the Queen was our Patron, and a major electrical installation. Also we give an annual donation to the Major for any charity he or she wishes to support.

Having been on the Council of the Royal Association of British Dairy Farmers for a great many years I was privileged to be one of the four delegates to attend the bi-annual conferences for The Royal Agricultural Society of the Commonwealth of which H.R.H The Duke of Edinburgh was President. The first I attended was in Toronto, Canada in 1967. The second was held in Nairobi, Kenya in 1969. The third was in 1971 and was held in Edinburgh, Scotland during the time of the Royal Highland Show. At our conference in 1973, which was held in Christchurch, New Zealand, I asked the Duke if he would honour our Society by becoming our first Patron and he asked that I should write to Sir Rupert Nevill with my request. The Duke agreed to do this and became our first Patron in 1975. The conference in 1975 was at Aberystwyth, Wales when I asked His Royal Highness if he would continue as Patron for a second term of office, but unfortunately he could not do so. The Duke attended all the conferences with the exception of Kenya. He was attended many

since, but 1975 was the last one I personally attended. Since then the patrons have been as follows:-

- 1975 H.R.H Duke of Edinburgh
- 1976 His Grace The Duke of Northumberland
- 1977 Her Majesty The Queen (Jubilee Year)
- 1978 H.R.H The Duke of Gloucester
- 1979 H.R.H The Duke of Gloucester
- 1980 Major Sir Rennie Maudsley
- 1981 Rt. Hon. Lord Hamilton of Dalzell
- 1982 H.R.H Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother
- 1983 Rt. Hon. Mrs Margaret Thatcher M.P The Prime Minister

It is impossible to get a Royal Patron permanently as we are not a national show.

Since 1961 I have been President of the Society and Show Director. It is now recognised as one of the largest one day Agricultural Shows in the country. During this period I have been dedicated to the show possible having more experience with other shows throughout the country. Secondly, I have been able to give nearly full time to achieve this object. Thirdly, I have had the use of our farm secretary who has done so much of the work from Eashing. For a great many years now I have had the backing of Stephen Lance, our Chief Executive Officer and Secretary, who has become as dedicated to the Society as I have been. I am sure the Society can rest assured that all the time Stephen remains its Chief Executive Officer and Secretary it will become even more successful.

I have held a unique position, which I don't think should be repeated after I have gone, i.e as President and Honorary Show Director. It will be essential to appoint a Show Director who can give a lot of time and dedication to help Stephen with the running of the show. It would be wrong to combine the President and Honorary Show Director under one heading, as at present. It would be advisable to appoint a President annually so that well known people could take over this office and perhaps give quite a lot of time to its wellbeing during their year of office.



## SURREY COUNTY SHOW MAIN RING ATTRACTIONS

- 1961 Dagenham Girls Pipers & Sheep Dogs
- 1962 Massed Bands of the Royal Marines
- 1963 Band of the Royal Horse Guards
- 1964 Sheep Dog Demonstrations
- 1965 Brigade of Ghurkhas Massed Bands
- 1966 Australian Axemen & Royal Marine Massed Bands
- 1967 a) Pageant of Mr Jorrocks Hounds & Adge Cutler & the Worzel  
b) Red Devils Free Fall Display
- 1968 a) Royal Air Force Central Massed band Display  
b) Royal Waggoners Musical Ride
- 1969 Royal Canadian Mounted Police Musical Ride
- 1970 Kings Troop RHA Musical Drive
- 1971 a) Massed Bands of the Brigade of Ghurkhas  
b) Parade of Heavy Horses
- 1972 a) Century of Haymaking – Pageant  
b) Royal Marines Motor Cycle Display
- 1973 a) Royal Marines Motor Cycle Display  
b) Massed Bands of Royal Corps of Transport and Women’s Royal Army Corps.
- 1974 a) Jousting Tournament  
b) Sheep Dog Display (mounted)
- 1975 a) Red Caps Mounted Display  
b) Surrey Constabulary Police Dog Display
- 1976 a) White Helmets Motor Cycle Display Team  
b) Sheep Dog Display (mounted)
- 1977 1<sup>st</sup> day  
a) Royal Canadian Mounted Police Musical Ride  
b) Massed Bands of the Queen’s Regiment & Women’s Royal Army Corps
- Jubilee Day  
a) Royal Marines Motor Cycle Display  
b) Camel Racing  
c) Heavy Horse & Vintage Tractor Display  
d) Philip Masson Aerobatics Display  
e) Red Devils Free Fall Parachute Display  
f) Massed Bands of the Queen’s Regiment & WRAC  
g) British Caledonian Airways Band
- 1978 a) Red Caps Mounted Display  
b) Parade of Beagle Packs  
c) Philip Meeson Aerobatics Display  
d) Band of the Royal Corps of Transport
- 1979 a) Australian Axemen  
b) Royal Corps of Transport Band  
c) Women’s Royal Army Corps Band  
d) Drum Horse & 4 Trumpeters of Blues & Royals  
(Massed Balloon Ascent, Red Devils Free Fall and S.U Hounds did not appear)
- 1980 a) Mounted Band of the Blues & Royals  
b) Mid-Wales Axe Racing Team  
c) Band of the Royal Corps of Transport

- d) Skydiving by the Royal Green Jackets
  - e) Mass Hot Air Balloon Ascent (did not ascend)
  - f) D.B.S Pony Exhibition and Parade
- 1981
- a) Cossacks
  - b) West Sussex A.C.F Corps of Drums
  - c) Band of the Royal Corps of Transport
  - d) Skydiving by the Royal Green Jackets (ex due to weather conditions)
  - e) Mass Hot Air Balloon Ascent (ex die to weather conditions)
  - f) Mid-Wales Axe Racing Team – in the Countryside Enclosure
  - g) Sheep Dog Display – CANCELLED BEFORE THE SHOW
- 1982
- a) Royal Signals Motor Cycle Display – The White Helmets
  - b) Band & Corps of Drums 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion The Queens Regiment
  - c) Surrey Police Dogs from Mount Browne
  - d) Skydiving by the Royal Green jackets
  - e) Hot Air Balloons
  - f) Mid Wales Axe Racing Team
  - g) Riding for the Disabled Display with Irene Benjamin