

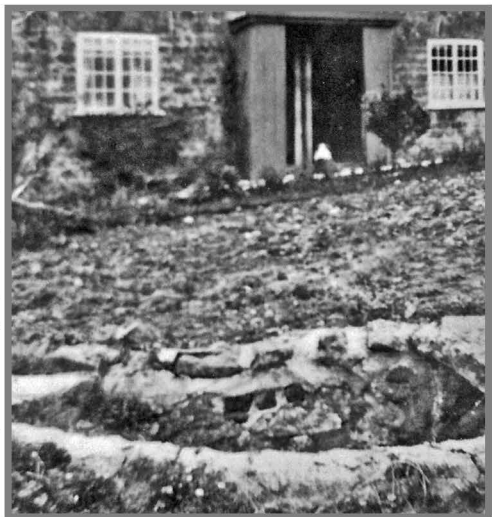
Water Supply

Mains water came along in 1963. Prior to that people managed without any problem. It was what we were used to. Every property had access to its own or a shared well or water chute. I can recall two drinking water chutes. In Uploders the water came from an iron pipe in the wall of Pine Cottages, (Tiddly Cottage) into the drain on the roadside. The pipe is still there but no water. The spring that fed it was probably diverted by the construction of the foundations for the garage built a few years ago.

Yonderover has two chutes. The one closest to Uploders on the south side of the road was drinking water. It was collected in buckets and carried back to the nearby houses for drinking and washing. On the way home from school on hot days we would cup our hand under the cool, fresh water and have a few mouthfuls to keep us going until we arrived home. Marjorie Randall told me that her mother used to scrub the chute every fortnight so that it was always spotlessly clean. I can confirm that this was most definitely the case! The water from the lower chute was, and still is, not suitable for drinking.

Water from shallow wells was dipped out with buckets. Deeper wells had a hand-pump alongside. During the 1950s and before the mains came along most properties had running water indoors. In our case a Stuart Turner pump pumped the water from the well to a tank in the roof which fed a tap in the kitchen. As the water level in the tank dropped the float switch triggered the pump and stopped it when the water reached a pre-determined level. The Bradpole plumber George Turner installed ours and many others in the village.

Our well (right) was shallow with half a dozen steps leading down to the water. It had a stone slab half-roof opposite the steps which gave some protection but it was effectively open to the atmosphere. Alf Hallett, my Godfather was an inspector with the local board and was very unhappy that we, and the rest of the inhabitants of Lodgers, were drinking untested and untreated water. I'm not certain if he ever drank any but I do know that he was a lot happier when we were connected to the mains supply.



As far as I know none of the village folk suffered any ill effects from drinking our untested and untreated water. We probably built up an immunity to any nasties. Or maybe it was bred in to our genes!



Rain-water was collected in butts, tanks and barrels for a number of domestic and personal uses. Our cat Mickey sitting on the rain water tank (left) - a favourite position as it caught the morning sun.

In this limestone area the groundwater is naturally hard and does not lather well. Rainwater gathered in the water butts is soft and was much preferred by the ladies

for their personal hygiene; the daily strip wash, a bath, and particularly for washing their hair. The men were not so particular and used any water, probably with carbolic soap!

The Monday washing also benefitted from the use of the soft rain-water. Less soap was needed and there was a lot less scum around the copper at the end of the washing.

Bath time was a fairly major undertaking. It was usual to have a bath once a week whether it was needed or not! Usually it was on a Sunday before school the next day.

The water was heated in a copper or an electric boiler and transferred to a tin bath. Our Belling boiler was easy, simply turn on the tap and run the water into the bath. With a copper the water was



transferred to the bath using a bowl-dipper (right) a small metal bowl with a wooden handle. On other days the folks washed thoroughly using a bowl of hot water, soap and a flannel. Showers had not yet arrived in Loders, or many other rural places for that matter.

Looking back it all sounds very primitive but the people, their clothes and houses were clean and well looked after. Compared with how life was 50 years earlier, life in Loders in the 1950s had made a big step forward.

Monday was Washing Day

Bonfires on a Monday were strictly taboo!



Most houses had a wash-house.

The one (above left) was at West View (Killick Cottage). It, like many others originally had a copper (above, right). This was a semi-spherical bowl, made from iron not copper, about 18 inches (450mm) in diameter. It was built into a brickwork or stone fireplace. On washing day the bowl was filled with water by bucket and the fire under the bowl lit to heat the water. A wooden lid kept the heat in.

The whites with added soapflakes were put into the copper and the water heated to boiling point. All the time the contents were prodded and stirred with a wooden washing dolly bleached white with use. After some time, the whites were removed with wooden tongs and rinsed in a galvanised tin bath filled with cold water. A blue-bag was added to give that extra special sparkle to the whites.

If needed some of the hot water was baled out with a 'bowl-dipper' and used to wash small items. The remaining water that had already been used to wash the whites was then used for the coloured items.

During the early 1950s most of the old coppers were replaced with electric boilers and later twin-tub washing machines. Life became easier.



After rinsing, the washing was put through the mangle, or ringer (left), to squeeze out the water. This involved feeding one end of the washing between the rollers and then turning the handle. As the item of washing was squeezed between the rollers the water poured out and was collected in a bowl that was placed on the platform beneath the rollers.

The mangle was a very effective and efficient piece of equipment and good fun to use. It was one of the domestic chores that we were willing to help with without too much complaint!

The rollers were spring-loaded so the pressure on any particular item could be adjusted. For sheets, towels and similar the screw on the top would be tightened so that the maximum amount of water came out. For items with buttons the springs were loosened because if the rollers were too tight there was a good chance that the buttons would be broken.

The washing then went on to the washing line, having first of all checked to make sure there were no rogue bonfires. Woe-betide anyone who had started a bonfire.

The final step was the ironing. By the 1950s almost everyone had an electric iron so it was just a case of plug it in and switch it on. If there was no wall socket the iron was plugged into the light socket. My grandmother had a two-way adaptor in the light socket which held the light bulb with a spare connection at the side for her iron. She never had a problem with it which I find surprising!

Prior to the electric iron, flat-irons (right) were used generally in pairs. They were warmed in front of the fire, on top of the range or in the oven. When the first iron was being used the second was warming ready for when the first one had cooled. Some folks kept their old flat irons for ornamental purposes but, if there happened to be a power cut, they came in very handy.



Toilet Facilities

There were no main sewers in the village until 1972-73. In the 1950s a few properties had the luxury of a flush toilet discharging into a septic tank and. I have it on good authority, directly in to the river. The vast majority did not. They had a more primitive earth closet or Elsan lavatory (lavvy or privy were the polite other names). They were situated in a far-flung corner of the garden; presumably for reasons of hygiene. In other villages, Netherbury, Broadwindsor and Abbotsbury and no doubt, many others, some were built directly above a stream which gave a convenient, efficient but not particularly hygienic system of sewage disposal.

They had no windows so were dark with spiders but were spotlessly clean. In frosty weather they were cold so visits were quick. No sitting around reading a comic or newspaper! One of the hazards of making a visit on a dark wet evening was the possibility (quite a high one) of stepping on some poor unsuspecting slugs and snails that were going about their business on the garden path. Not nice!

At Shatcombe House (right) the toilet was tucked away in a far corner of the garden. It had a change of use in 1973 when it became a garden tool shed. The building with a tiled roof was Willow Cottage's privy. The building with the brick corner (on the right) was the wash-house with a copper.



The lavatory designs varied. Trossachs (Butterwell) in Uploders had a two-seater and one of the cottages in Yonderover a three-seater. The three-seater was about twice the width of the normal. It had a well scrubbed wooden seat which extended the full width of the building. If I remember correctly, the openings at the seating positions were small, medium and large. The three bears always came to mind when I paid a visit!

In 1973 virtually every property was connected to the main sewer. New indoor toilets were installed and small bedrooms and box-rooms converted to bathrooms. The impact of the sewers was far greater than the arrival of the water mains. Then it was just different water flowing from the same tap. The sewer took life into the 20th century.

Transport



Very few people had cars but the Southern National Bus Company ran an excellent service with its green and cream buses. The route was Bridport to Askerswell and back. A workman's bus left Uploders for Bridport at about seven-thirty in the morning. A bus for shoppers left at ten-ten and returned at one o'clock. This bus went on to

Askerswell, turned and picked up in Uploders at half-past-one. The next bus from Bridport was at four-thirty with another service for the workmen leaving Bridport at about quarter-past-six, after the net factories closed at six.

On Saturdays a late bus left Bridport at about quarter-to-nine in the evening. This fitted in neatly with going to the pictures at the Palace and the Lyric. They



both ran two sittings, or houses, made up of the supporting film, Pathé News (left), the main film and at the end the National Anthem when the audience stood to attention and sang the words. The bus timetable was such that we went for the start of the main film of the first house and left at the end of the supporting film at the second house. The National Anthem came in the middle.

Most of our fathers worked in Bridport and usually cycled to work. If the weather was bad they might catch the workmen's bus but the weather had to be really bad for this to happen. Most started work at eight o'clock so several of them, my father included, set out together at just after half-past-seven to make a leisurely and sociable journey to work. Today it would probably be a 'commute' to work. To we folks in the country commuters only existed in London. The men took a pack of sandwiches wrapped in grease-proof paper and some took a thermos generally with tea. There were no take-away coffees in those days!

As far as we youngsters were concerned we made most of our journeys on our bikes. Even if it was only 50 yards down the road to one of our mates' homes or to Bridport, West Bay, Burton Bradstock and the adjacent villages. Between us we had a few elderly relatives conveniently scattered around who we could visit particularly if we were in need of refreshment, which we invariably were. They always made us welcome and we received a pat on the head when we reported back home that we had called to see them.

To go longer distances we went by bus or train. To anyone living in and around Bridport public transport was much better than it is today. To get to London was simple, catch the train at Bridport Station (right), change at Maiden Newton to join the Weymouth to Paddington train.



Maiden Newton was the gateway to almost anywhere in the country. The north-bound line led to the Midlands, the North and South Wales via Bristol, to the West Country and to London (Paddington). The south-bound line took us to Dorchester and Weymouth with a connection to the Weymouth–Waterloo line at Dorchester. For destinations on this line including, for example, Bournemouth, passengers from Bridport changed at Maiden Newton, took the south-bound train to Weymouth, alighted at Dorchester West, walked to Dorchester South and boarded the Weymouth to Waterloo train which stopped at Bournemouth as well as every station on the way!

There was serious talk of a railway halt at Loders but sadly it never happened and even sadder was the closure of the Bridport to Maiden Newton branch line in May 1975. At the time it was inevitable as it carried hardly any passengers but, were it still here, maybe it would be well used again. We will never know.



The Royal Blue coach company ran a fast and efficient coach service along the South Coast. Bridport Coach Station was a stopping point that connected with other services and was a comfort stop for the passengers. This made it very easy for people from this area to catch the Royal Blue. The routes ran between Penzance and London so were convenient for many destinations along the south coast or further afield with a change of coach.

The Black & White Bus Company of Cheltenham ran a service between Cheltenham and Bridport which linked up with the Royal Blue east-west route. It also provided a good link for north-bound travellers from Bridport. We had relatives in Cheltenham who originated from Loders. This coach service was very handy for them to return here and for people here to visit them.

Shopping and Tradesmen

In the early 1900s the village had carpenters, thatchers, blacksmiths, a cobbler, builders and carriers. There was a butcher, a post office and small shops. Local bakers delivered bread and farmers the milk. Many folk kept chickens for eggs or they could be bought from the farms.

In the 1950s there were still several small businesses in Uploders that made life easier for people. Granny Hyde ran a shop from her house, Riverdale, selling tinned food, jams and marmalade, Lyons cakes, Smith's crisps, blocks of salt and many other delicacies. There was great excitement on 5 February 1953 when sweet rationing ended. Grannie Hyde gave us advance notice that sweets would be on sale on that day. Nationally as well as locally stocks quickly ran out and rationing returned!



At 2 Box Cottages Walter Tudball, the cobbler, worked from his front-room which was dedicated to shoe repairs. He moved to Uploders in 1932 and retired in 1952 aged 84 having spent 68 years as a cobbler. He worked at a table in a room with walls and ceiling blackened from years of coal fires and oil lamps. He was surrounded



by the tools of his trade, piles of leather, nails, hob-nails (for boots), Blakey's protectors and all the other bits and pieces associated with his trade. An oilskin cloth covered his table. At meal times he cleared a patch and laid a sheet of newspaper as a tablecloth. At the end of his meal he screwed up the paper and, in the winter, used it to light the fire the next day. He worked six days a week. On a Saturday evening he put everything away in readiness for his day of rest on the Sabbath. He regularly attended the Methodist Chapel across the road. Mr Tudball (above, left) on a workday, and right, in his Sunday best ready for Chapel.

There was Charlie Gale the blacksmith and Mr Brown who did contracting work, road repairs and the like, and recharged acid batteries. Both are mentioned elsewhere.

Lower Lodgers had the village post office, shop and butchers. Mrs Wells ran the shop and post office. Albert (Tubby) Wells, her husband, was the butcher with a slaughterhouse behind their house and the post office.

The village was served by at least three Bridport grocers. Pearks' Stores ran a large green bus-like vehicle with no windows along the sides. It was lined with shelves and had a fold-down counter at the back where Mr Cecil Reeves served his customers. When Pearks' closed, Mr Reeves ran a small grocer's shop on the east side of the road towards the bottom end of South Street in Bridport.

Other grocers, International Stores, Cornick's, Whitmore's and Elliot's did it differently. During the week the delivery man called with his order book. He sat at the table and took the order for the week's groceries from his customer and then delivered it a few days later. The Elliot's order and delivery man was Joe Jeanes. He drove a brown 'Elliot's' van CFX 640. He was also a keen local politician, a member of Bridport Town Council and was Mayor twice; in 1981 and 1983. He is pictured in Part II with the delivery van and staff of Elliott's in about 1930.

Bread was delivered several days a week. It came fresh and still warm from the ovens. There was nothing more enjoyable than a hot crust with a generous spread of

what quickly became melted butter and cheese! Caddy's from Bradpole who took over from Corbin's and also ran Bradpole Post Office made and delivered bread. Also, Roberts, Samways (with a



green van) and the Co-op from Bridport. Pictured above are Whitmore's and Roberts' delivery vans parked in South Street, Bridport.

Newspapers were delivered Monday to Saturday by Cyril Tiltman who also ran the St Andrew's Road Post Office. Almost everyone had a newspaper so it was a busy round but Cyril was so quick that it was no problem for him. The Echo was delivered in the evenings usually by a school-boy earning a bit of pocket-money. A Mr Lee delivered the Sunday papers.

We had mail deliveries twice a day; early morning and afternoon. People knew that a letter posted in time to catch the first collection at the post-box would be delivered in Bridport and surrounding villages that afternoon. It was not unusual to send a postcard with the message "See you for tea this afternoon". All of this with flat rate postal service, no first and second class mail.