

David grew up at 3 Box Cottages in the small West Dorset village of Loders. His Aunt Bertha lived at 1 Box Cottages and other aunts, uncles and cousins lived nearby. This was how it had been for generations.

At the age of five he went to the nearby Loders School where maths was one of his best subjects. It was a small school with only 25 to 30 pupils aged between 5 and 11 and, for much of the time, with just one teacher.

During a hot spell in the summer holidays when we were about eight we decided that as we could not go to the sea-side we would make our own pond. The original idea was a swimming pool but we quickly realised that this was being slightly over ambitious! David's father, Derrick, was in the process of rearranging the back garden so everything was at hand to dig a large hole which we banked up with soil dug from the hole. At the back of 2 Box Cottages was the communal pump used by the three cottages. There was no mains water in the village then so we got busy pumping water into buckets in an endeavour to fill the pond. Being unlined the water disappeared as soon as it was tipped in. Undeterred we carried on until the whole area was a sticky, muddy mess and we were covered in mud from head to toe. David's mother, Mabel, appeared and we were both given a good telling off and I was sent home only to receive another even sterner one!

Outside school we had no formal parks or playground. Everywhere within reach was our playground. Like all young boys David enjoyed exploring the lanes and fields around the village always accompanied by his faithful black dog 'Nipper' a friendly animal of very mixed breeding. The river Asker, which ran along the bottom of our gardens, was also a source of fun; fishing, generally messing around and getting wet and muddy. All the things that children enjoy.

David was a very keen cyclist which gave him the means to explore further afield to Bridport, West Bay and beyond. Burton Bradstock with its shingle beach and the sea was a favourite. The journeys were often planned to visit one of his many aunts and uncles who would welcome him with a drink and a biscuit.

In our early teens we joined the Youth Hostel Association (YHA) and set off on our bikes to spend a few days in the Mendips; Cheddar, Wookey Hole, Wells etc. There was no means of keeping in touch with home as neither of our parents had telephones. Very few did then. Looking back, it was not surprising that our parents seemed very relieved when we arrived home safely!

During the summer holidays, David often went to London to stay with his

aunt Amy (Metcalf, née Symes) and her family. They ran a newsagents and David enjoyed helping on the paper delivery rounds.

His two cousins, Marilyn and Colin Metcalfe occasionally stayed with Aunt Bertha at 1 Box Cottages. Colin being a year or two older than us and coming from London was much more street-wise than we boys from the country and so we followed his leadership to become much more adventurous than we were normally. As well as our usual summer pursuits, cricket, walks with the dog and generally doing very little. I remember our attempts to build a dam across the River Asker. We were not successful, which is probably just as well, but it kept us occupied, wet and happy for several days.

Like most children in those days David was a keen stamp collector and was a junior member of the Bridport Stamp Club. He was a tough negotiator in stamp swapping. It was never a straight one for one exchange but was based on the valuation of the stamps from the Stanley Gibbons' catalogue. This usually resulted in a much-heated debate!

David also enjoyed card games, Rummy and Newmarket come to mind and in wet and cold weather long afternoons were spent at the Monopoly board. The competition was always very keen and most of us were very bad losers!

On leaving Loders School he moved on to the newly opened Alfred Colfox School, a comprehensive and one of the first in the county. As well as his school work he found the time for a job delivering the Dorset Evening Echo around the village. At the Colfox School he spent five years in the top class for his year before taking his O-levels and moving to work in London.

It was the parting of the way for us but I still recall our boyhood years with much fondness.

Bernard Paull

26th August 2018

PART II
The Earlier Years
Life in Loders; Late 1800s to the 1950

Page	Details
53	Uploders
81	Yondover
82	The Ex-Servicemen's Hut
84	Yondover (continued)
91	Bridport to Maiden Newton Railway
94	New Street Lane
96	Lower Loders
98	Loders School
102	Lower Loders (continued)
119	Loders Court, the Church and the Vicarage
128	The Fête
135	The Wars
138	The Roadmen
139	The Carriers
141	Deliveries
143	Braiding
148	Hygiene and Beauty
149	Charabanc Outing and the Mothers Union
150	The Women's Institute
152	The Scouts
153	Football Teams
154	Lost Public Houses
158	Journey's End
160	Addendum - Memories of a Wartime Evacuee

Loders is a picturesque village lying in the Asker Valley about 3 miles from Bridport. This rural community grew up along the road that follows the River Asker and served the numerous farms in the area. The village is made up of three areas, Uploders in the east, Lower Loders in the west and Yondover in the middle.



An aerial view of the Asker Valley from Upton Farm to Lower Loders.

Uploders

In the early 1900s Uploders boasted the Chapel, the Parish (School) Room, a blacksmith, two carriers, two public houses and a shop.



Postcard by the Bridport photographer Claude Hider c1930 of the eastern end of Uploders looking southwards across the River Asker. The barn that was converted to a house in 2019 is on the right of the picture.



The Cattistock Hunt c1950 led by Edgar Bishop of Yondover Farm on the road between Uploders and Askerswell just west of Folly Cottage.

Matravers



Aerial photograph with Matravers Farmhouse and farm-building. Matravers Bungalow overlooks the road junction. The road to the left leads to Sheepwash where the sheep were dipped in the disinfected river water before being sheared.



Matravers Bungalow was built c1945 for farmer and cattle dealer Mr Herbert Bartlett and his wife Monica on their retirement from Croads Farm. Previously this was the site of the Matravers Cottage, the home of Miss Jemima Shaw.



Matravers House in 1936 with Mr Adrian and Mrs Joan Lesser with visitors strolling in their garden with visitors.

Upton Manor Farm



The Dairy House fire in 1935. The ridge pole to the left of the chimney remains unburnt. Fires were a not infrequent occurrence in the village. Many resulted from sparks on to thatch from house chimneys or passing steam engines. The fires always created a lot of local interest!



Picture taken c1950 showing the Dairy House in the right-hand middle distance. Jack Crabb was the Dairyman. He replaced Percival (Percy) Bowditch in 1946.

Upton Manor Farmhouse



Aerial photograph of Upton Manor farmhouse and farm buildings. The houses in the foreground are Upton Peep and Water Cleaves.



Upton Manor Farmhouse from the south between 1907 and 1918 when Mr Edwin Randall was the Farmer. The farm employed a number of farmworkers. Most lived nearby in tied farm cottages.

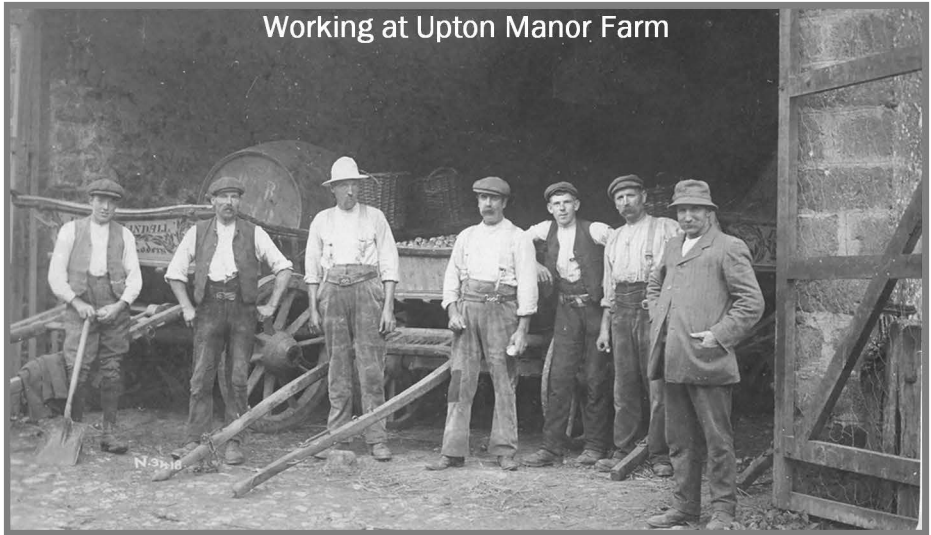
The North Devon Reds

Colin Bowditch the son of Percival (Percy) Bowditch, Head Dairyman at Upton from 1941 to 1946, gave this information on the Devon Reds. This breed made up the herd during Percy Bowditch's time at Upton.



This picture was taken up to 50 years before the one below. The person holding the bull is likely to be the farmer or farm manager. The head stockman is standing a little away ready to grab the horns or halter if the bull began some antics. He is wearing boots and gaiters rather than a top hat and long coat. The animals look very different, the one above is of a really ancient type of beast, narrow shoulders and horns that would not be tolerated in a conventional herd. The bull below is definitely of the improved Devon Red Ruby breed. The breeding has concentrated the horn shape so that it is less obtrusive in a herd context. It's also a better shape for both milk production and with some beef characteristics.





Farmer, Edwin Edward Randall at Upton Manor Farm with his farm workers c1912. The farmer's name is on the wagon on the left. The other contains apples for cider making. The men (left to right) are George Randall, Arthur Hansford, Alf Crabb, Jim Hawker, Eddie Hansford, George Hawker and Edwin Randall. These were just a few of the farm workers at that time.



Farm workers, c1920, with long handled ditching spades. Ditches around the fields were dug out and the soil used to build up the adjacent hedge banks. Second from the right is Elias (Alec) Peach, born in 1885.