

A.C. Well they milked 16 cows.

Int. Not as many as you've got. How many cows have you got now?

A.C. About 50, 50 in use most of the time in the dairy, of course you always get a few dry cows.

Int. How many people did he employ?

A.C. Well, he always employed one regular worker, but he always had strappers to come in, what they call strappers, they come in b'night and do haymaking or hoeing or whatever. You always had labour in the village that would come on, casual labour.

Int. You and Morris, of course, when you were old enough, you helped on the farm.

A.C. I milked cows when I was about 11, and I milked cows a'fore I went to school, hand milked.

Int. How long did it take you to milk a cow by hand?

A.C. It's all according to how much milk he gives, but if you averaged about 8 an hour, you did very well, 7 or 8 an hour, an' they didn't give quite so much milk in those days as they do now.

Int. How much milk did they give them compared with now?

A.C. Well, if you had a cow give three gallons a day when she calved, she was a good cow. They give double now, you can get 'em give six. All the feeding stuffs then was grown on the farm, you bruise your own corn an' one thing an' 'nother, it wasn't all this bought in stuff that you buy today.

Int. So what sort of cows were they?

A.C. Shorthorn, shorthorn cross. I've got Friesians now.

Int. What else did your father do when he farmed?

A.C. Well he used to grow corn. During the last war it was more or less scheduled what you had to do. You had to plough a certain field and if you had to put wheat in there, you had to put wheat in, we had to grow flax, two acres of potatoes, four acres of flax. It went to Netherbury, that's where it went, Slape Mills, Netherbury, was a big flax concern, where they used to soak it, then it went on down to the factories for rope. I think every little farm through here had to grow so many acres.

Int. Your father kept pigs, I expect.

A.C. Oh yea, always kept quite a few pigs. We never kept very many sheep.

Int. You started the sheep.

A.C. Yea, and more so now that quotas is in and I've had to cut the dairy quite a bit.

Int. What were your earliest memories of the village?

A.C. Well, I can remember driving some cows up the road and I can remember falling down up there by the shoot and then, after that I got lockjaw. They reckons it was by fallin' down and skinnin' me hands. And the horses had been up the shoot up there and they reckons that's where I picked it up. I'm lucky to be

alive, I'm on borrowed time really. It was only because they took me to the doctor and it was old Dr Oliphant, and his son was back from India, which was Geoffrey Oliphant, who hasn't been gone many years, he died about two years ago, and 'twas he that spotted that I had that. And it was funny enough, about 5 or 6 years ago, I was in the barbers shop and he come in to have his hair cut. And I said "you don't remember me, doctor, do you?" and he said "woss your name then?", "Crabb, Arthur Crabb of Loders". And 'e said "Oh yes, I remember you, you had lockjaw", and he said "I cured two people, yes I cured two people and you was one o' them".

Int. What was the treatment for lockjaw?

A.C. Well, I don't know, I 'ad me teeth took out, I know that much and I know that I didn't know nothin' for 10 days went on and then I woke up very hungry.

Int. How old were you then?

A.C. 4 1/2 I think, but I can remember fallin' down and I can remember bein' taken to the doctor, because I can remember goin' down through Barrack Street and it was the Lyric Theatre then and I can remember 'em showin' me the lights. And I can also remember they takin' me to the hospital, Bridport hospital, and I remember cryin' when my mother come on and being nursed by a nurse.

Int. Very soon after that, you must have started school. What were your memories of Loders school?

A.C. Not alot really.

Int. You didn't really enjoy school?

A.C. No, my life was home, really. I was always keen to get back home.

Int. What age did you leave school?

3. A.C. I left school at 14, and as a matter of fact, when the war was on, I used to stay home for half a day to pick up the potatoes. We used to have a short summer holiday and then we used to have two weeks in October for potato picking and they expected us to go round the farms picking up these potatoes. We also growed swedes too, I can remember quite a few swedes that we grew. Grew 'em really for the animals an' tha', because there was what they used to call coopins (sic) an' tha' come an' you used to buy a bit o' barley meal just to keep the pigs. Actually, then you grew so much as you could on the farm. You didn't go to the corn merchants quite alot at all.

Int. You were pretty self-sufficient, you had to be.

A.C. You grew mangle and kale for the cows and you grew hay, and that was it. And you didn't never give 'em much cake 'cos you never bought much.

Int. You had an orchard, didn't you. Did you make cider?

A.C. Oh yea, quite a big orchard. My father used to make cider, but he gave tha' up. And when they got married first, they used to make butter.

Int. I imagine most of the farmers used to make cider.

A.C. They always had a cheese or two and some cider and that's where they got the strappers, what we call strappers, the casual labour. They used to hoe the roots in the summer and do the haymaking and tha' and they went hedgin' and ditchin' in the winter, the labourers, but then in most of the cottages there were labourers. They either worked on the road or worked on a farm.

Int. So then in the village, the different sorts of people that you had were the casual labourers.....

A.C. And the gardeners, like Sir Edward le Breton, I suppose 'e 'ad like 3 or 4 gardeners out there and then there'd be servants.

Int. Did your mother ever had a servant girl who did some of the work for her?

A.C. No, but when we children were small we always had the three cottages up the road, there'd always be one of them as 'd come down and give a hand. Always Mondays, washing day, and things like that.

Int. The cottages belonged to your farm and the labourers lived in them?

A.C. Yes.

Int. So there were the labourers and the farmers and the vicar and Sir Edward le Breton at the top?

A.C. Yea, well we always had a village policeman and he was always a deterrent. I mean when you come out of school you always seen the 'bobby' somewhere, 'e was keepin' eye on you really. If you was goin' 'ome 'e would say "'allo sonny" or summat like that, he was the bobby and you respected the bobby. When 'e come up in t'yard to see father, probably to sign the movement book, which they did twice or three times a year, because that was their job.

Int. What's the movement book?

A.C. That's the book to say you've bought some pigs or cattle or one thing an' 'nother. Thats what they call the movement book. He only come an' sign it, 'e don' know whether you done it or no. So if you had swine fever in your pigs an' you bought some an' he'd come round and say "you bought any pigs off so an' so?" But then you've got to keep a record of everything because then there's the TB come in, you got to 'ave all your animals tested for TB. You also got 'em tested now against abortion, so when a calf is a week old, you gotter put a tag in 'is ear and if you send 'im to market you got to say you sent him by a certain date and put down 'is ear tag. So, as a matter of fact, it's the same

as if your calves went abroad and they found when they killed 'im with TB, they can trace 'im back.

X Int. What about shops and trades in the village. Coming through the village, from the Court, in this direction, can you tell me what shops and craftsmen there were.

A.C. Before Mrs Wells come 'ere, the shop was opposite and, as far as I can remember, there was a Miss Remington there and we used to go in round the Pound and up over the steps for sugar and liquorice and wha'ever, when we 'ad a penny.

Int. Wasn't she a relation of Bill Budden's? An aunt?

A.C. I think Bill Budden's mother run the shop at one time, the Post Office. Then someone else run the shop, I think it was Radcliffe, I can't remember. Then the Pound there, I 'eard my mother say they used it as a pound. If any animals went stray, that's where they shut 'em in. Opposite there used to be a saw, where they used to cut up timber and one thing an' 'nother. Where the car park is, there used to be a cottage an' I remember Walter Hansford lived there and 'e used to go round hedgin' and help wi' hay making and harvesting. When the thrasher come in 'e used to go labouring, putting the sheaves on t' thrasher an' tha'.

Int. That cottage burnt down, didn't it?

A.C. No. It was pulled down to make the car park. I think Palmers bought it and pulled it down. I'll tell you who'll tell you more about that, is Harold Derby. Now if you see Harold Derby, he can tell you more than I can, 'cos 'e's that much older.

Int. Coming back down the village, this way, were there any carpenters when you were young?

A.C. Yes, I think there was carpenters an' tha', because I heard my mother say that Fooks lived where Mrs Marsh do live, and he were the schoolmaster, and I think my mother went there, and she started school when she was three, my mother did.

Int. You remember number 23 Loders, because you had a relation, who lived there, was it an uncle.

A.C. Great uncle, my mother's uncle, but my great uncle, Charlie Hyde.

Int. Do you know how long he had lived there?

A.C. As far as I know, it was my grandfather's old home and I think they lived there all their life. But he died, 80 he was, and that was in 1939 and I can remember going up there and clearing the place out with my grandfather and my mother, an' tha' and his two brothers. I heard my uncle say, at Dorchester, that when his mother and father married first, tha's where they live, and my uncle, who used to live at Bradpole and used to drive the milk lorry, he was born there, and that must be about

90 years ago. And then it was empty and the chaps came back from Dunkirk and it was took over then and I think there was about 22 soldiers billeted in there. I think some of them was officers. They was dug out in them cospes up there. They used to come straight through our yard with the supplies for 'em.

Int. So there were quite alot of soldiers in Loders?

A.C. Yea, there was alot after Dunkirk. We had the East Kents and West Yorks.

Int. And there were quite alot of evacuees too, weren't there?

A.C. Yea, alot of evacuees. As a matter of fact, my granny, who lived at number 35, Granny Hyde, they had a mother and child there, but it wasn't their life, the village life, they stayed a few months and went on back to London, they couldn't stand it here. I think most families had a mother and baby or mother and child in, but none of them stopped very long.

Int. Can you tell me the sort of things people did when they had a bit of leisure.

A.C. Well, I think they always used to skittle for a pig and as far as I know, they always had me grandfather's barn, out by the church, that Lord Hood has turned into cottages there, it used to be a big barn there, and they always had the skittle up there for the pig. They used to put the skittle alley in the barn, as far as I know.

So that was a great event, skittling for a pig. When did you do that, what time of year?

A.C. Well, I should imagine they did it about August time when the fete was on. There was alot of things went on at the vicarage, you know, especially in Mr Beardmore's time and there was Mr Hutton, I can remember the vicar, Hutton. I can remember him, and I can remember his daughter, then Mr Beardmore come and then Mr Willmott.

Int. I suppose, during the war, the fete stopped.

A.C. I s'pose so. They always had a gymkhana, I can remember the gymkhana in the park, because there was the Normans and the Bishops and the Randalls an' tha', they all had horses, you see.

Int. There used to be a football club, didn't there?

A.C. Oh yea, there used to be a football club, a cricket club and they used to play in Hurdle Mead, just up from Lord Hood. They've still got the gateway there and the bridge. As you go to Boarsbarrow, that used to be two fields there to Bradpole Bridge - well, we call it Bradpole Bridge, Bradpole people call it Loder (sic) Bridge - half way down there, you'll find some steps halfway through, there used to be a pavilion there, where they played their cricket in the summer and football in the winter.

Int. Did you play in any of the teams?

A.C. No, I didn't. Then I think the cricket team from Loders packed up, and then they went to Powerstock and now they gone to Melplash, a'nt they. They used to play on top of Wellcome Hill, Powerstock did. Not so many years ago, you used to see 'em up there playin'. I think Loders and Powerstock amalgamated when they got short of players and one thing an' 'nother. Fred Derby, who's jest gone on, was one of the best cricketers, well, one of the best sportsmen in the village.

Int. They're quite a big family, the Derbys.

A.C. Yea, just opposite the school there, where Mr Howells, the vicar, lives, they've built the new house there, they pulled down where Harold and the Derbys used to live and sort of brought them forward an' tha'. Where the vicar lives is like tha', but where the Derbys lived was a little bit further back, you went up through.

Int. There's another road at the back, through Raymonds.

A.C. Yea, well 'twas the back entrance to the cottages, warn't it

4. Int. What about the Young Farmers. Were you active in the Young Farmers?

A.C. Oh yea, yea. When they started first, it was always Askerswell Young Farmers, but I don't know, they used to come to Loders and then to Litton, 'cos it was always Askerswell, Litton and Loders. Quite alot of the meetin's was in the hut up here. There was a discussion club going during the war and one thing an' 'nother and that was at the old school house, what Mrs McLaughlan got now. It was the Old Parish Hall, but it was Uploders School House one time warn' it.

Int. Do you know when that was used as a school?

2. A.C. I can't remember when it was used as a school, but not so many years ago, it was turned into a house, you see.

Int. So really you've seen a great change in the village, but it's still your village isn't it, still very much a farmer's village?

A.C. Well, not so much now.

Int. There are far fewer people employed on the land now.

A.C. That's true. Well, you must understand, they used to grow alot of roots, turnips, swede, mangle, which wanted alot of labour. I mean now you got a drill to put in one seed here and onother there an' tha', before you used to drill 'em thick and then you used to have to go on with a hoe and single them out. And the labourers, they used to take, say, two acres an' tha', and that was to hoe 'em, to single 'em, and after they'd singled 'em, to run 'em back, hoe 'em again, probably once and probably twice.

Int. So, in a way, the social life of the village has changed. Do you regret that, do you feel sad about that?

A.C. No, well there's more entertainment going on now because distance is no object today. I mean, I've walked to Powestock to a barn dance, and walked back and thought nothin' of it. And t'was the old bicycle.

Int. So there's more variety. Though life probably seemed very pleasant, you hadn't got the same freedom, had you, to do what you wanted to do and go where you wanted to go, then?

A.C. No. Well, when we left school we had the old Austin car, used to be nearly a day's work to go to market, to Dorchester market and back, you know, you've about an hour on to get there, sort of business. Now you can do it in twenny minutes. I mean the roads are straighter. I can remember when Dorchester road wa'n fenced. All down over Kingston Russell, I can remember the war and there was a Mr Bennett, he was what they call on the war ag (sic) and he went there wi' a tractor, an old Forestan tractor and sort of cleared it. I wa'n't really a tractor with a bucket on the front, you know, they put a rope round the brambles, a wire rope round the brambles and pulled them out. And they done alot of research up there, whereas, you see, it's all changed since the war, by mechanisation wi' tractors an' one thing an' 'nother. On the hills and downs they only just runned a few sheep, as simple as that, now it's all cultivated to corn, every bit of it's ploughed, and if there was some bracken or what we call furze or brambles or anything like that, it's just cleared now, it don't exist.

Int. So it looks quite different?

A.C. Oh yes, it looks alot different.

Int. Better or worse?

A.C. Better, it's better for farming. Alot of the humps is graded off and levelled out, that you can work it with the tractor, whereas years ago they wouldn't dream, I mean you couldn't expect them to send a man up ther wi' two 'orses or three 'orses to go ploughin'. What they used to do, they always used to go wi' three 'orses and use two and then take one out an' give 'im a rest and put another in and that. But a good carter, 'e started seven o'clock in morning and 'e stopped for lunch and 'e was back in stable two o'clock. And 'e 'ad to go 'ome and 'ave is own dinner and then 'e come back and always fed 'is 'orses. Horses then, mind, was a very valuable animal, they thought the world of a horse.

Int. How many horses did you have on the farm?

A.C. I can remember two, but I think before that, they had three.