

Int. Do you regret the difference in farming or do you find it much easier now?

A.C. Well, 'tis alot easier now, 'twas hard work for the horses.

Int. And hard work for everybody, really.

A.C. But they used to enjoy it more. It was enjoyable and they made their own fun. They was all happy, sort of business.

Int. So, in a way, you regret it.

A.C. Yea, I s'pose. It was nice to 'ear the hooves of the horses going on and the wagons and carts and one thing an' 'nother.

X

Continuation of Interview.

JOHN HUGHES interviewing also.

A.C. My father used to go to Bristol and 'e always used to buy a bunch of Irish heifers. They were shorthorn. They had good cattle over in Ireland, the Irish stock was always good. They come into Bristol, see, an' they had special sales over there, an' 'e always used to go an' buy twenty and they used to bring 'em into Bridport station.

J.H. By train?

A.C. Yes. During the war, when cattle went to market, you used to have to take it there to the Ministry. The Ministry used to buy it, it had to be weighed and graded. They used to take it on out Bridport station, in cattle trucks. I see'd many a cattle truck go up ther^z wi' cattle lookin' out the sides of 'em.

J.H. So that's how you transported them in those days? They used to drive them, of course on drovers roads.

A.C. Well, years ago, they used to drive the sheep ~~from~~ here, even to Beaminster Fair, else it was Poundbury Fair, in Dorchester, and they used to drive the sheep wi' dogs. I know when they used to do it, as a boy, Bishops used to always do it at Poundbury Fair and they used to take about three days, three stops. They used to hire a field for the night to put 'em in, and then before the sale, up Poundbury, they used to probably rest a week before they sold 'em. That's how they used to do it.

J.H. They reckon this road at the back here, that goes past Bill Buddens there and round the back, that's an old drovers road.

A.C. When I was about four or five, I can remember my father wi' a horse and wagon, and I sat up 'long side 'im, 'cos tha's how my mother an' father used to go to town when we was small, 'twas a pony and trap. I can remember when 'e bought 'is first car. A pony and trap, and I can remember the calf up the back of the wagon and father drivin' on with the calf and t'^{ow} calf following on behind. Now, there was a man called Joe Childs and he lived -

you know where Raymond Crabb do live - you know there's a little barn building there, a little small place, he used to live there, Joe Childs did. An' he used to be a rabbit catcher and he did a bit o' hedgin', but if you had any cows wanted drove anywhere, he'll come on and drive 'em, he's what I call a drover. If you wanted to shift some cows, you bought some keep, let's say to Shipton, somebody would go on with the horse and trap wi' a bit of hay in, the cows 'ould automatically follow and 'e was the drover that come on behind. I can remember Joe Childs, and I remember he used to come down 'ere and catch father's rabbits. 'Cos rabbits, you see was a pest then. During the war they was worth a jew's eye, sixpence a piece.

J.H. Did he have ferrets?

A.C. Oh yes, he kept ferrets. He used to tail snares and all the rest of it. He used to live in that little 'ouse an' 'e 'ad a chimney in it. Raymond kept pigs in it, one time.

J.H. How would he have had a bath and things?

A.C. They didn' have many baths then, did they? D'you know when we was a boy, we never 'ad a bathroom. Our toilet was up the end of the buildings up there. You know what we used to do, you know our egg dairy, next door was the copper and every Saturday night that old copper would be heat up an' we'd go out and have our bath out there. Then went across through front door an' g'won to bed, 'ave a cup of milk an' then g'won to bed. That was our bath night.

J.H. You had one of these galvanised baths?

A.C. Yea..When they lived up the cottages up there, tha's how they used to bath. The old wash 'ouse down the bottom, they had the old big bath an' tha', and the used to warm up the water in the copper and 'ave a bath.

J.H. Was there a tap in the copper, or did you ladle it out?

A.C. 'Ad a bowl dish an' dip it in. A bowl dish, got quite a few of 'em a' 'ome what I dip out corn an' tha'.. I've even got the old bath in barn what we 'ad a bath in. I've got one or two baths, one when we was small, we 'ad a bath in front of t'fire, 'e's still up there, in t'store now.

J.H. Was that on a Friday or a Saturday?

A.C. Saturday, and clean clothes for Sunday. I used to get a cold. winter time and mother always used to put some thermagene on. You know thermagene, pink, used to pu' i' on inside me vest with a couple o' safety pins to keep it on.

J.H. Do you remember camphorated oil?

A.C. Yea, my mother used to swear by that. Mother always did have some syrup of figs, but we never 'ad much of tha'. We din' never need i'. I always remember she said "you got a cold comin'" an' tha', an' cut out a square o' thermagene and put a

couple inside our vests, on our chests. If I 'ad a cold in me younger days it used to go to me chest. But then that's how they used to do it. I mean, these cottages, it's only the past twenty years they've 'ad bathroom put in, 'twas only since the war had gone through the village. I mean, up by the school, all those houses, well, other side the road was what we called the village pump. Well, Bill Budden gone an' done away with 'un, but actually all those 'ouses up along there 'ad a right to that pump, and 'e should never 'ave done away with 'un. It was the village pump, and all those houses round that part, had a right to that pump. Now, there's another pump too, in the village. You know where Harold Derby lives? In between the row of houses, at the end of 'is place, there's a pump there, for that row of houses. That is why Palmer bought that house, where Harold Derby is to, for the water for the pub. And where Mrs Marsh do live, Harry Legg used to live there, the thatcher, at number 41, and that's where they used to get their water. All those three cottages out along there used to go there with their buckets and git their water.

Int. When did the piped water come to the village?

A.C. I don't 'spect it's twenty years ago, is it? Yea, and the houses 'ave more or less got modernised since. Then of course, then they 'ad t'ave the sewer, didn't they? 'Ti'n very long ago they put the sewer in down through 'ere and the water, that i'n very long ago, less than twenty year. An' all the houses 'ave 'ad bathrooms and all the water put in, you know, they've bin modernised since, 'ad a bit done. We 'ad a bathroom before, because we put one in, an' tha'. Well, I'll tell 'e when 'e was put in, 'e was pu' in about twenty-five years ago, when the kids was small, we managed to have one put in, with a little soakaway out there. They said they couldn't do it and then we found it c'j'ust run across the yard. Adrian's 29 and Sandra's 34, so it was about 30 years' ago. It cost about £2 to put the sewer in. But the point is, just for we pullin' the chain and a drop of bath water to go down, we go' er pay about £60 a year. Bloody ridiculous ain' i'? But we been lucky you see, we ain' on the mains fer water, 'cos you see wha' we use up the dairy. That's cripplin' alo' o' farmers you know.

Int. So you're not on the mains at all. Where does the water come from, up the top?

A.C. Well, we got one shoot up there, which runs out the back, which was the older supply and then we go' the spring out there, then we go' the big tank, which is higher up. I don' pay no mains water, all I pay is the water rate on the flush toilet and the sewer pipe.

Int. You have your water tested every so often?

A.C. It go' to be certain standard, see, for the dairy people. You'd have no trouble dig a well out there. If you got a water diviner 'ere, I bet 'e a pound to anything it wou'n go down very deep an' you'd find 'un. See Monty got a darn good well in there. I can remember when the Slades was in there, they 'ad 'im dug, and as a matter of fact, 'e's about 30 foot deep an' when the ground's full up, 'e's about that off the top. Yea, oh yea, Monty got 'im outside of 'is back door, yea, 'e pumped 'im ou' the other day. When Chris Anderson was in there, summat 'appened and the old pump went on an he di'n switch off and pumped 'im right out, pumped it dry. So we 'ad a pipe from our dairy, runnin' down there, put it in there, filled it up for 'im. But Monty took water out of 'im and said 'ti'n long 'till it fill up again and 'e said twa' lovely water. He bin toyin' with the idea of puttin' a pump in, and all the rest of it. But he's a bit hesitant, he want a do i', but.....

J.H. Are these wells bricked?

A.C. No, concrete cylinders, big round cylinders, you let 'em down one on top of the other. Monty bin down 'is, he put a ladder in and went down there.

Int. Did the Bishops ever have a well?

A.C. No. All you need to do is to dig a hole a few yards from the river and 'e bound to fill up.

Int. It wouldn't be very good water, though, would it?

A.C. Well they reckon s'long 's water, doesn't matter how bad 'tis, 's gone over six stones, 'tis alright. You can' 'ave any worse water than what' they do pump out the river down Pymore. Now I'll tell 'e wha', tha' water starts to Beaminster, and up the back o' Beaminster, the road I don' 'spec' you've ever bin on, down where old milk factory was, turn an' go roun' Beaminster, it runs across the road there, because it starts up in what we call White Sheet Hill. It comes on through there and you see it, runnin' 'long side the road, well 'e goes on, down to Netherbury and it goes on to Weytown an' 'e goes down t'Pymore. Well, when you go up Beaminster road, all those drains lead into ditches off the road and run into that river, and all those farms, they all run into tha' river. Right, when 'e git down there 'e's blue and yet they do pump it and put i' on in there. Yea, there's a pumpin' station down there, yea, they use i'. But if you go over the bridge, down Pymore, on the way to Dottery, the water's the colour of your jumper, and that's s'posed to be good water. They put it through their filters and thingummyjigs an' one thing an' 'nother.

J.H. It can't be too good because there are no fish in there.

A.C. You see, when they get this water, what they wan' do, they wan' go up Nallers and that's where they want to make the dam,

there, and they'd 'ave pure water, comin' out the springs. But then these reservoirs, they've got birds in 'em an' one thing an' 'nother, so 't isn' very good water, eh!

J.H. You've got the best, from all those hills.

A.C. Yea, I'm laughin'!

J.H. The horses that you kept, did you have the heavy horse, the shire?

A.C. We didn't never keep the really heavy horse, it was sort of half way, a cart horse, but it wasn't the heavy horses with the big feet, it was a little bit smaller size, y'know. They was cart horses, but they wasn't the really heavy shire.

J.H. Was there a sire that they brought round?

A.C. Yea, my grandfather, Crabb, tha's how he started. He and his brother, Herbert, they used to travel with what they called the enter (sic). They used to go round breeding season with the horse. They thought the world of their horses you know.

Int. Do you remember the threshing machine? That used to belong to the Bishops, didn't it?

A.C. Yea. They used to have two during the war, the traction engine. They cut 'em up, I said to Adrian, I wish I'd bought one, drove 'im off. Cor, Adrian'd of been in 'is element. His grandfather, up Eype, y'see, they 'ad 3 or 4, tha's why 'e got in it, yer see, 'cos great-grandfather Lee and Adrian's uncle Phil, Barbara's uncle, tha's wha' 'e done all 'is life, drive the thrashin' machine. Whereas Barbara's father more or less done the milk round, dairy 'n' one thing an' 'nother, whereas 'is brother, Philip, 'e went round with the thrashin' machine, that was 'is job, thrashin' machine and reed maker. That was what 'e done all 'is life, Barbara's uncle Phil.

J.H. Who actually mended them when they went wrong?

A.C. They used to mend 'em thereselves. 'Ti'n alot to go wrong wi' 'em. I mean, actually, it all worked on pieces of wood and they just replaced them.

J.H. What about the steam engine, who mended that?

A.C. Well, I s'pose, the only time 'e wanted to be mended was when the fire box went. I s'pose alot of the castings was done down the foundry, along West Road. I think they still do casting down there now, don't they?

J.H. And of course the blacksmith would be around.

A.C. Oh yea, the village blacksmith, the blacksmith's shop was up the road. I took the horses up dozens of times to get 'em shod, in Uploders. I s'pose there was a time 'e went out an' tha', but if 'e was still goin' now 'e'd be a goin' concern, wou'n' 'e. Philip Symes, tha's where 'e learnt 'is trade, it's Don Townsend's now, but 'e was the blacksmith, 'e learnt it up there.

J.H. Was he apprenticed?

A.C. Well, the point was, when I was a boy, if you went in the buildin' line, and you wanted to be a carpenter, the firm took you on, calls to give you a three year apprentice and you was under a carpenter, a skilled carpenter. And then if you was goin' to learn building, you was under the mason. You started off wi' mixing up a bit of cement and then 'e said, oh you can put a brick or two in there and then you do this and do that, and after about five years you progress. I mean, you di'n' go to college. I mean, Adrian went to Kingston Maurward, up there, a day a week, but I never did, I di'n' need to. I learnt it all from me father.

Int. Things change much more quickly now, don't they?

A.C. Yea, I mean, alot of books come in my place, 'Wha's New in Farming' and this tha' an' the other, but still the basics is the same.

J.H. But there are new drugs and things.

A.C. Oh yea, but that's more the veterinary side of things, ain' i'? 'Course lot o' people is very technical on these farms what wi' computers and all this out o' parlour feedin' an' all the rest of i', but you see, they get problems. Animal can only stand so much and they try to push 'im over 'is limits, and if they do push 'im over 'is limits, they do get trouble. If a cow don't give so much milk, 'e got to go on, 'e's no good, but they don't realise that if 'e 'a'n' done it this year, 'e might do i' next year, an' I always say, you can' take out what you a'n' go' in. Some years yer 'ay i'n' so good, your feed i'n' so good, yer silage i'n' so good, so therefore you're not goin' ter git it the other end. Las' year we had no trouble at all to produce milk, milk just fall out the cows, but now this year's bloody 'ard graft. The dry summer done i', they jes' didn' get the nature, the grass and nothin' in i', so therefore, we got a cow now, she calved about March, an' she g'won out dry, but she'll be better for it when she comes in. But the milk she give this time i'n' 'alf as much as she give las' time. It's all done with the seasons an' all tha'. Now alo' of tha' milk I produced las' year, I could do with, this year. But there's nothin' I could do about i', we're feedin' the cows 'xactly the same.

Int. You were over your quota last year?

A.C. Oh, alot over last year. Well, they took one milk cheque away from me, because I was over quota. I di'n' get paid, I had to pay they 19 pence a litre. Well, they paid me 14, 15 pence a litre, they paid me tha' an' I 'ad to pay they 19 pence what I was over. I paid they 5 pence a litre an' was givin' 'em the milk. 'Tis ridiclous i'n' it, but there you are. There you are, the 31st of March, that finishes there, 1st April's another year,

see. 'Tis only dates, really, when you come to look at it. With farmin', it's supply and demand. O' course they never threw that milk away, although they never paid we for it. They made powder or cheese or somethin' with it, they di'n' go on down the drain with it, did they.

J.H. This lead contamination, where are you going to get paid from, insurance or Dalgety or what?

A.C. I don't know, nobody knows. I don't reckon we shall get paid for it, I reckon it's bad luck. I can't see any insurers or anything goin' cough up all that money. They arrested two men out in Holland for the swindle an' one thing an' 'nother, can face 15 year in gaol.

Int. No good for the farmers, is it? Well, I'm going to have to find you a few trout to put in that trough of yours. We've lost all our trout in the river.

A.C. Those are herons, there are one or two herons out there. They'll 'ave all the trout. Now, Steve Norman got a pond up Ashley and these 'ere birds come in, what do dive, sea birds, I s'pose 'tis gannets, and 'e said, after they do come in, two days after, you get alot of fish up top of t'water floating about, after they've bin in and 'ad a strike.

J.H. We found a gannet that was dead, walking down at Eype, they're lovely birds. They're lovely to watch, they curl over and go straight in.

A.C. Tha's right, yea, and they do come up there to 'is trout. 'E a'n't 'ad the pond up there long. At Ashley, what used to be me father-in-law's old farm. Opposite Limbury, up there, Salway Ash. Out in the field, the other morning, there was 'undreds up there. There's alot of seagulls now that is inland an' tha', they don't go out to sea at all, do 'em. On these rubbish tips an' one thing an' 'nother. There's alot in roun' Bridport, ain' i'.

J.H. Tell me, Arthur, have you been out shooting those pheasants?

A.C. No. I'll tell 'e who 'ave got alot, is Mrs Dommett, down there, and they're cheap this year. As a matter of fact, they say there's so many about that some shoots can't get rid of 'em, they're burying them.

Int. What's happened to your shoot this year?

A.C. Well, I've come out of i'. I 'aven't really got time, I 'aven't got time. I get up in the morning, I do me work, race round. It's all right for they, they can be there ten o'clock, they ain't got nothin' to do, all they gotter do's get up an' be there wi' their guns an' tha', and they go round an' 'ave a shoot. I've got all me work to do, I race aroun' an' one thing an' 'nother an' I just can't do it. As a matter of fact, they put

some up there an' they did alot of shootin' an' they wasn' really feathered up enough to shoot. It's really bloody massacre, I reckons, it's terrible. I tell you what, they put 'em up there, they reared 'em an' I don' think they went very far away, and I think they was quite young an' tha', an' they wen' up there an' shot 'em. I don' know how many they shot, I a'n' 'eared about it, but they bin up there an' shot 'em.

J.H. And how are the foxes? I haven't seen any.

A.C. Well Maurice shot two up in his car the other day. There was three in it. There was only one pheasant apparently, but three foxes. But I 'ad a big fox 'smornin'. I 'ad a snare, and 'e was in 'e, cor, di'n my little pup go mad for 'im, cor! No, I saw this run a long time an' I thought to myself, ah, there's a fox or two about 'ere, so I tailed this snare, an I s'pose 'e been tailed about three weeks or a month, an 'e, reynard was in 'im 'smornin'. 'Tother night they was shoutin' like anythin', alo' about.

J.H. I suppose that railway line gives them alot of cover.

A.C. Yea, yea. that railway line's always bin known for alot of foxes, in those brambles an' tha'. There's one or two down the bottom of Monty's too, Monty did see one in his field and I think they do lie in under those brambles that grows on they banks, see.

J.H. I suppose they keep the rabbits down.

A.C. Well, there's some about, but there i'n't so many o' they about. The myxae knocked them about. Last year there was alot of rabbits about, but the myxae tied 'em. But rabbits get over that now, see.

J.H. What about badgers, Arthur, have you seen any?

A.C. Yea, there's a few of those about.

J.H. So what sort of year do you think we're going to have?

A.C. Cold and dry I should think, we won' have no snow.