

INTERVIEW 3

INTERVIEWER: Pat Hughes
Yondover Farmhouse
Loders

DATE: 1988

BILL BUDDEN, B. 1921

SNISHOPS

LODERS

Interviewer: Reminiscences of a childhood in Loders, by Bill Budden.

I'm talking to Bill Budden, who was born in Loders. In fact, I think your family have lived here for many, many years.

B.B. Yes, 1637 in the Christening books.

Int. You were actually born in the village. Whereabouts?

B.B. At what was the Post Office, which is now demolished, and Newberry's bungalow was built on the site, opposite the Farmers Arms.

Int. And when was that, what year was that?

B.B. 1921.

Int. Tell me a little bit about your family.

B.B. Yea, my father was a smallholder, he was a butcher by training. He'd come out of the army and learnt butchering, because his father was a butcher by trade, but they became then smallholders and dealt more in animals than actually slaughtering them, though they did slaughter animals, until I was about 7 or 8 years old, and they sold them through the village.

Int. They sold them direct to the customer. What sort of animals did they keep?

B.B. Oh, sheep, pigs, cows, mostly pigs.

Int. So the village was different, did it look different in those days, the actual countryside, and were the farming methods and the types of farms different from what they are now?

B.B. Oh yes, because some of the bigger farms have been broken down into smaller units. The horses have gone, of course. There were many horses when I was a kid, and the wagons have gone. The motor car is here, the TV aerial is here, there's less thatch than there used to be, and of course there are more buildings, more dwellings built as infill between cottages.

Int. But the village street has always stretched one cottage after another, hasn't it?

B.B. Yes.

Int. I think there were more orchards then, weren't there?

B.B. Oh yes, we grew cider apples, and we sold them generally to Palmers Brewery and cider was made in the village. Herbert Bartlett had a cider press at Uploders, that's where Tommy Dennett is now, and certainly I would think there was a cider press opposite the chapel, in Knowle Farm.

Int. Your mother worked, didn't she, as well?

B.B. My mother kept the Post Office, which my grandmother had done before.

Int. And your grandmother lived quite near.

B.B. Yes, in Pound Cottage. When I was born, she lived, I think, here on the high pavement, where Oak Cottage is now.

Int. Can you tell me some of your earlies memories of the village, when you were very tiny, before you went to school.

B.B. Not too much before I went to school. I can remember my first day, going to school, I went to the village school here, and one of my father's sisters' husbands took me to school, because my mother thought that I was rather indisciplined and probably wouldn't go to school with her. He was staying with us on holiday and he took me along and everything started fine.

Int. Did you enjoy school?

B.B. Oh yes, school was quite fun to me. My grandfather was very much against education. He thought that kids should work and he had to work, and there was no way that anyone else should do anything but start work as soon as they could. As soon as they could read, they should start to work.

Int. At what age would that be?

B.B. Oh, I was about 10 or 11 when I was discussing winning scholarships for the Grammar School and that's when my grandfather kind of thought that I was going ^{down} to have the wrong road completely.

Int. And in fact you did get to the grammar school. Was this difficult for the family, or did you get a scholarship?

B.B. Yes, my brother and I, we both got scholarships. They were free, all we had to provide was a bicycle. But my family were not well off and the Post Office salary, at that time, was £52 per year, and was, I think, right up until the war. My mother supplemented this by selling vegetables and quite alot of fruit, which my father dealt in, because he graduated into becoming a market gardener, and High Acres was entirely a market garden, probably from the war, because he bought it from a man called Sidney Marsh, who lived in Orchards, next to the Farmers Arms. My father bought that, I would think about 1935 and from then on became a market gardener and extended his land. He bought more land off the same owner and we had more animals, and we were much

more into farming rather than into smallholding and cattle dealing and slaughtering.

Int. It became quite a developing business.

B.B. Yes.

Int. Can you tell me about some of the other shops and businesses in the village.

B.B. Yes, can I just go back and say, my father was probably coming back from the war, he with his £40 gratuity, he soon bought a motor car and became motorised, whereas most of the others in the village then were still with horses and carts. Although, obviously the farmers and the better off people had motor cars, although there weren't too many of them.

Int. Which war are we talking about now?

B.B. Oh, coming back in 1918.

Int. So that was after the first world war. It was quite unusual then to have cars.

B.B. Yes, he bought several cars. He told me once he bought a car for half-a-crown.

Int. Tell me something about the shops and businesses in the village, when you were a boy.

B.B. Yes, opposite us, where the Wells family have the Post Office now, was a butcher's shop, run by Normans, who are at Bradpole. Then it closed and for various periods of time, tenants came in there and sold other things, until they went bust and moved on. It was a cycle shop for a short time, during my young life and then a vegetable shop, for a very short time, and then the Wells family came just before the war, and it became a butcher's shop again. Then next door to them was the village carpenter, a man called Bill Symes. That's now the car park of the Loders Arms. He lived in a thatched cottage there and made the coffins and all the toilet seats and all the doors in the village, and gates, and made anything one wanted from wood. And the other side of the Loders Arms was another carpenter, called Freddy Fooks, who was the architect and overseer of the building of the ex-servicemen's hut, which is now the village hall. He died tragically, because there was a fire at the Loders Arms' stable, next door to his cottage, and he thought his thatched roof would go up, so started bringing furniture down, fell downstairs and broke his neck. I was about 8 or 9 then, I suppose, about 1931 or 2.

Int. There were quite a lot of fires in the village in those days.

B.B. Yes, I remember one or two others, but none of them very serious, not in my time, but before that there had been some. Fire engines were motorised in my time, so they got there more quickly.

Int. What about the pubs, tell me a bit about the pubs.

B.B. There were the two, the Farmers Arms, the same building as it is now, probably the oldest building in the village, that one, then the Lodgers Arms, then at Uploders there was the Crown. The Spyway is technically in the village, that's the Three Horseshoes, but we never considered it to be in the village, we always considered it to be outside of the village, although geographically it is in. Then there's the fourth, of course, the Travellers' Rest, on the Dorchester Road, that's actually in the village.

Int. And was Bell Cottage not a pub at one time?

B.B. Yes, I understand Bell Cottage was a pub, because my grandfather, in his younger days, I've heard my grandmother say, used to go to the pub there and his pony used to bring him home. He didn't know his way home, even, after a session there. But I don't remember that being a pub, and I don't think Judy Greening does, she's older than I am.

Int. So that must go way into the last century. How did people live? Can you describe a typical working day, for your mother, for instance.

2 B.B. Yes, there were other businesses of course, that I haven't mentioned. Along in the cottages to the west of Orchards, in that row of cottages, there was the village thatcher and his brother, that's Harry and Felix Legg, they thatched houses, both in the village and outside. They walked everywhere, pushing some kind of cart with their thatch and spars on it. They were very ubiquitous for pedestrian labour, they were their own business, of course. Then there was the forge at Uploders, the Gale family, Charlie Gale in my time and he shod all the horses. We used to have to take the horses up there and wait for them, and he put rings on the cartwheels and did anything in hardware and forging, which was needed.

Int. Could you describe a typical working day, say for your mother or father.

B.B. Yes, my father would rise about 5.30 or 6 o'clock and milk some cows and then deliver milk through the village, from a bucket, and then would go on about his other business, buying and selling pigs and calves. Later on, of course, he had to go about his business of market gardening and so it was a longer day then. He used to work very long hours, from, oh, 5.30, 6 in the morning, right through until dark, and that meant 10 o'clock, through summer. My mother would get up about 7.30 and get us kids up, because, when I was about 11 or 12, I had to deliver the milk through the village and we had to get to school. Her Post Office opened at 9 o'clock, probably a little earlier, if the postman came earlier. We had the village telephone, or one of

the village telephones, and therefore we had people coming in, needing to telephone hospitals, doctors etc. and so she worked on, then, I suppose the Post Office closed at 6 o'clock. The postman would come at 5.45 and after he'd gone, she could close down and then she started to cook an evening meal and do work that she hadn't had time to do during the day. She had no washing machine and no electric cooker, there was no electricity through the village; I did my homework with an Aladdin lamp; and so everything took a long time, preparing it. One of the things I had to do, as a very young kid, was pump water up into a tank, for cooling milk, that was before we had electricity and an electric pump, which used to take quite a long time.

Int. So people really did work very hard, and the children as well.

B.B. Oh sure, and they had bicycles. Most people went to work by bicycles, a few could afford cars later on, very small cars, Austin Sevens and things, a few motorbikes, but mostly people went to Bridport by bicycle. One or two went Dorchester way by motorbike.

There were stonemasons and bricklayers, in addition to thatchers and journeymen of other types, who lived around, who would come and do jobs for you, such as hedging, that would be done piecework; and ditching, other work, painting of course. There were self-employed people doing all those jobs then, for very small pay and very little security, because there wasn't a National Health scheme and neither was there a pension ~~scheme~~ fund etc. You could 'stamp a card', as people termed it and if you had kids needing food, you didn't stamp your card.

Int. So people were really very self-sufficient in the village.

B.B. Sure, oh, they grew all their own vegetables, kept chickens and rabbits and pigs, and fed them the swill from the house and the crazy affluent days of Kit-e-Kat and Pal dog foods and all that palaver, wasn't available at all and domestic animals had the crumbs from the table and the scraps, and were probably alot healthier for it.

Int. Was there a bus going through the village at that time?

B.B. I don't remember a bus, but there was a carrier, who'd carry people to town. I'm sure there wasn't a bus to school, because I would have taken it on wet days. We always cycled to the grammar school. There was a carrier who, in my earliest days, lived where Raikes is now, in that same house, name of Macey, and they had horses and traps until they bought a model T Ford, I would have thought, around 1930, and motorised it. And there was another one at Uploders, I believe he lived at Knowle Farm, but I may be wrong, and he ran a slightly larger bus and

bought and sold eggs and other things, and ran to the market and also acted as carrier for people in the village.

X Int. So how did people do their shopping for things like clothes?

B.B. Oh, walked to Bridport. Also the Bridport tradesmen had their vans coming around the countryside. My mother never fetched her groceries from Bridport, a man called George Elliott used to come round once a week, sometimes on his bicycle, mostly on his bicycle, and take orders and they'd be delivered on the following Friday. He would give credit, and my mother would pay next time he came. People walked to Bridport, ladies walked to Bridport and walked back with shopping, 'specially on market days, which was Wednesday. Farmers, who went to Bridport, would bring shopping back for people. My father often used to have shoppers ask him to bring things back for them, which he did. There was a taxi in the village, there may have been more than one. I only remember one, it was kept by a man called Ernie Watts, who was Arthur Crabb's uncle. It was quite cheap to go to town by taxi then, I can't remember quite how much it was, but it was very cheap. So people used to get together and hire him, but mostly they walked. My mother, on her half day, which I believe was a Wednesday, she would walk to town and come back with a little shopping, not too much, because my father would bring it by car.

3 Int. What did people do in their leisure time?

B.B. They did many things, partly providing food, I mean they shot rabbits, they ferretted for rabbits, they shot pigeons, they kept their rather large kitchen gardens going and there was a football team and cricket was played. When I was about 10, I guess, we played tennis. I don't know how long before that there was a tennis club, but certainly we had a tennis club then.

Int. Where did you play?

B.B. Well, we were mostly sponsored by Sir Edward Le Breton, who kept the court, and he was kind enough to let us use his tennis court; also there was one at Uploders we used, at Matravers Farm, I've forgotten who owned that at the time. X Sir Edward Le Breton was a great benefactor to the kids of my generation, because he kept the scout pack and we all went out to the Court and had bunnings and ran the boy scouts in the park and we had the run of his library. In fact, we had the run of his billiard room and his house and each Christmas, he used to send the Gamages catalogue out to the school and give every child in the school a free Christmas present from the catalogue, limit, half-a-crown. You could get a train set for half-a-crown, and he gave that every year. He was very, very kind and generous to the kids.