

MRS HILDA (JUDY) GREENING

Born 13th December 1904

Hilda (Judy) Greening was born Hilda Marjorie Crabb, at Bell Cottage, next to the quarry and lime kiln, on the way out of Loders on the Powerstock road. Her father, George Crabb, previously of Wytherston, was a shepherd, working for Mr Walter Bishop of Yondover Farm, and her mother, whose maiden name was Eastman, made nets and helped in the fields, with the other women, doing the hoeing. As an old man, George (Shep) Crabb rented one of the former almshouses in Loders village street.

Hilda went to Loders School, as did her older and younger brothers, Bill, born in 1902 and Frank, born in 1910. Frank helped dig the foundations of the present Village Hall in 1926, then the Ex-Servicemen's Hut. She didn't enjoy her time at school, particularly when she had to do arithmetic, and neither did Frank, but Bill was bright and eventually went to Canada, where he became a farmer and, on a visit back to England, took Frank back with him. They were both very successful, each eventually owning farms of over 2,000 acres. In 1978, while her brothers were still alive, Hilda went to Canada and much enjoyed her visit to her extended family.

When Hilda left school at 14, she went straight into service at Loders Court as a kitchen maid. She married Eddie Greening in 1926 and spent the early part of her married life in one of the Yondover cottages. Like many other women from the village, she was an outworker and made nets. She had two daughters, Audrey, who now lives near Bournemouth and has twins, a boy and a girl, and Avril, now in Devon, who has a daughter. Hilda now has six great-grandchildren.

INTERVIEW 2

INTERVIEWER: Pat Hughes
Yondover Farmhouse
Loders

DATE 1988

HILDA (JUDY) GREENING, B.1904

21 LODERS

Interviewer: I have with me Mrs Hilda Greening, who was born in Lodors in 1904 and has lived here all her life.

Beginning of tape missing.

H.G. Well, you see I'm in advanced years, can I bring back some of it again?

Int. Now, can you tell me, where you were born in Lodors and when?

H.G. I was born at Bell Cottage, 13th of December 1904.

Int. Can you tell me something about your family.

H.G. Well, we were working people, my father was a shepherd and, I suppose like any other family, agricultural workers.

Int. He was working at Yondover, wasn't he, at Yondover Farm?

H.G. Yes, at Yondover Farm, with a Mr Bishop.

Int. Can you tell me some of your earliest memories, as a small child, in Lodors, up at Bell.

H.G. Well there was the quarry, that was a great attraction and alot of men were employed there. When you looked in the lime kiln, it made you shudder, really. Sometimes the men would have a drop of cider and get in a heated argument and a fight would break out, and one poor man rolled down over and broke 'is leg. And my mother dragged 'im out first of all, dragged 'im out.

Int. He nearly went in the lime kiln?

H.G. Oh, it makes you shudder to think about it, and then 'e rolled down over. Well that was much better, warn' it, a broken leg than a frizzled out body.

Int. Much better. Some time before then, but you don't remember exactly when, Bell was a pub?

H.G. Yes it must 'a bin, because people, you know, older people from Powerstock, that passed by, used to tell us it was a pub, but there was nothing, that'd gone. They said the Nepeans at Lodors Court closed it, it encouraged too many poachers.

Int. The stone they got from the quarry, they used to put that on the roads, and the roads were pretty rough, you were saying.

H.G. Oh they were rough, terrible, yes.

Int. They hurt your feet?

H.G. Oh they did, wore your shoes out. Oh it was very hard, and I think that's why, those days, so many short cuts was made through the fields to avoid those hard lanes.

Int. Was that when the footpaths started, or were they always there?

H.G. There was alot of footpaths, years back, and they're trying to revise them again, aren't they?

Int. They are trying to keep the ones that are still in existence.

H.G. Alot have gone. There's alot of difference, some were used more for the workers on the farms, alot of them must have bin, I think.

Int. So they weren't necessarily public footpaths.

H.G. The public did use them. There was so much of these footpaths used those days.

Int. So if we got a map, you might be able to show us where some of the footpaths were, perhaps.

H.G. Well, I don't know whether I would, the grounds over Uploders an' that, I couldn't say where those were. Around Bell, probably, there's a few, but I think I've forgotten that.

Int. Do you remember any of the names of the fields round Bell?

H.G. There was Smokum, Cocksford, Quarr, Raglands, Wetlands, and what was the other one - Bellground, Gatehood, Smokum, I said that.

Int. People don't use those names now, do they?

H.G. They don't, and I'll tell you why they 'ave altered. All these little fields, the hedgerows were built up and they've been thrown into one field and 'tis all lost.

Int. That's sad.

Gap in tape

H.G. The first one that drove the tractor there, he was a young man, and um, the horses.....

Int. The tractor was Mr Bishop's tractor, at Yondover.

H.G. Yes, it was 'is tractor. Someone 'ad driven it before, but 'e had gone somewhere, and my brother, 'e did alot of tractor driving and ploughin' the land and workin' the land for Mr Bishop. My brother worked for quite a while on this farm, and then 'e went to Canada.

Int. Is he still in Canada and is he still alive?

H.G. Yes, he's still alive, he was born in 1902 and 'e went for a while in Canada and 'e came back, and he got homesick, I think it was. He came back home, but you see, he came from Powerstock station at the top of Wellcome Hill, and he looked down the valley and 'e saw everything was huddled in, one on top of the other. It's so different from the wide open plains of Alberta, Canada and 'e made 'is mind up right away, 'e had to go back.

Int. Was he farming in Canada?

H.G. Oh yes, he worked hard, but 'e did get on, he made 'is money there. And when 'e went back that time, he took my brother with 'im, my younger brother.

Int. So you've got relations in Canada.

H.G. All my relations. I've got nothing back here much, the most of them are in Canada.

Int. Have you been over there yourself?

H.G. I have. It was lovely.

Int. Tell me a bit more about what the village looked like. You say alot of the hedges have gone.

H.G. It's 'appened everywhere, 'asn't it, no matter, you see, wherever you go the little fields and hedgerows 'ave gone. Well I suppose it was the day and age, it 'ad to go.

Int. Can you describe the village street when you were a child.

H.G. Well, like I say, it was just laid down with this rough stone, and the pavements outside the cottages had this gravelly stuff and 'twas never pressed in, it was a mess. Your feet 'd sink in it, oh.

Int. What about the houses themselves, were they more or less as they are now?

H.G. The houses opposite the Loders Arms, they were what they called the almshouses, for the poor people, I thought they were about sixpence a week, very low rented. Yes they were, in that day and age, that's going back a long time. The whole of the village was owned by the Lord of the Manor, Colville, but I think before that there was a Beadnell and then the Nepeans.

Int. And then, of course, Sir Edward le Breton.

H.G. Sir Edward came after the Colvilles. He bought the Manor and then 'e bought alot of Uploders, bu^l Loders belonged to one landlord, the whole of Loders and all the cottages. It was called the Manor.

Int. Tell me a bit about your time at school.

H.G. I didn't like school at all, not really and I must say, I was good at lots of things, but arithmetic, ooh, I didn't like it, and yet my older brother was so good, 'e was bright, 'e came out and Mr Fooks, the schoolmaster said, "I can teach you no more, you can leave." But I, and my younger brother wasn't all that brilliant, like me, but many subjects we were good on, but I don't really think I liked school, but there again, they were happy days.

Int. You used to have friends in the village, the other children.

H.G. Yes, but there again, we lived more or less a life on our own at Bell because there wasn't many children wanted to come up there. We had such entertainment in the fields, with the

animals, the sheep, you see, helpin'. I'd gone out in the fields to hack the turnips for the folds and, you see, there was alot of hurdling done, see, that's gone out, hasn't it?

Int. Was this your own land round Bell?

H.G. No, this belonged to Mr Bishop, that lived 'ere, owned alot of land, 'e rented it from the Manor, you know what I mean. And eventually that was all sold off and tenant farmers had the chance to buy their own land, and Mr Bishop bought Yondover Farm, and the little bit 'e was rentin' beside, went. That was made up in another small farm and another farmer bought it, but alot of the tenant farmers bought the farms they rented.

Int. Can you tell me about some of the different people you knew in the village, like the blacksmith and the carpenter and people like that.

H.G. There were two carpenters, and where I'm livin, that was no cottages, that wasn't cottages, there was number 22, that was an old cottage, but where my house and the next one is, that was a big barn. Then it went on into another, um, where they pulled the wagons and that in. It was a carpenter's, where there was wagons and anything that wanted to be mended and overhauled. But there again, part of that is gone, 'cos the Reverend Howells have got part of it.

Int. There used to be a carrier in the village, at what is now called 'Raikes', I believe.

H.G. Teddy Woodrow, he had a trap - oh 'e was a law unto 'is own! And 'twas too funny, 'e used to take the netting - Lodors did alot o' nettin' and 'e would take the nets into the ware'ouse and bring back the morse(?) and the money and then sometimes 'e 'ad to hunt through all 'is pockets to find the money to pay people. Well, 'e got muddled up and I think soon ended 'is career.

Int. Was there another carrier after that?

H.G. I think there was one at Uploders, a Brown, but I don't know. But 'e was the one at Lodors, Woodrow.

Int. Tell me about a day in your mother's life, what would be a typical sort of day at home, at Bell?

H.G. Well, she did the braidin', she'd like to go out wi' the women. All women of the village, they'd do the hoeing, go out wi' the spitters, as they called it, proddin' up the dandelions and thistles. They 'ad a bag round their waists and as they spit, dug up these thistles and the docks, pushed them in and as they walked across the field, they dumped 'em in the hedgerow.

Int. She'd wear a long, brown skirt, something like that?

H.G. Well no, my mother was very clever with 'er needle and she really dressed 'erself a bit more fashionable. Never 'ad the long skirts, smart for that day and age. Some of the women used

to wear what they call the tilt bonnet, they were beautifully made, beautifully made, and a bit hanging down the back and tied under the chin. They was beautiful, puckered up or ruched, they called them the tilt bonnet.

Int. Have you got anything like that at home, any old bonnets?

H.G. No, my mother never 'ad the bonnet, a hat was more her , she wore a straw hat.

Int. Where did you get your water, you weren't on piped water.

H.G. In that day and age we had to go down across the field to get our water. I think Mrs Bishop had tried to have something done to the well, there was the well 'ouse, what we called and she had it done, but they said, in later years they had to bore deeper down. The pump never got down on the water.

Int. How far did you have to go for the water?

H.G. Across the meadow, about a hundred yards.

Int. Quite a way, in the winter.

H.G. Yes 'twas, and as you came back, it was all up hill to get back and sometimes the farmer what had it then and later years, 'e'd run a bull there and that was a terrible thing to do because 'e wasn't a very quiet thing, that animal, and we had to just, when it's lied out one end o' t'field, we 'ad to scamper down so fast as we could and come back with this water.

Int. Did it ever chase anybody?

H.G. Well I'll tell you then what a tragic end that bull came to. The farmer that had it there, 'e brought it away from Boarsbarrow, they said Boarsbarrow was strong ground and a bull would turn a bit funny on that ground, and 'e brought the bull t' Bell. One day, that farmer always carried 'is gun, and one day as 'e was approaching 'e on the 'igher ground at ^{Stoke} ~~Stoke~~ ^{Locombe}, that bull started comin' to 'im and 'e manoeuvred round it and 'e 'ad the gun, there was two cartridges in that gun and 'e fired them in the buttocks of that bull. And that bull stood there and never moved and later on, in late afternoon, 'e got the bull cart to come out from Hansford, that lived near the station and loaded that bull and went on with it. 'Twas a wrong thing to 've done to it, but we was glad to see the end of that, 'cos 'e was turned a bit , but 'e turned on the right one didn't it.

Int. When you say the strong ground makes the bull vicious, what do you mean?

H.G. I don't know, but I suppose there must be a bit of difference in the feed or whatsoever, but it's just something the old people say. This bull definitely had a nasty temper when it was brought to Bell and it was a shorthorn.

Int. When did you leave school?

H.G. Well, the day and age was, when you left school, you went into service, and I went to Loders Court, to the Le Bretons. No,

not the Le Bretons, Sir Edward Le Breton's mother had it first, Mrs Faulkener. Sir Edward, he was Colonel Le Breton then, he married and Mrs Faulkener, she went away to Surrey somewhere, and then Sir Edward took over the Court.

Int. So you went there, I suppose, at the age of about 14.

H.G. Yes, out of school and away in the world to earn me living.

Int. Did you live in?

H.G. Yes, kitchen maid, it was ^{hard} ~~hard~~, oh!

Int. Tell me what you had to do, tell me about a day as a kitchen maid at the age of 14.

H.G. Oh, the washin' up and the saucepans and the tins and the bakin' tins and the spoons, knives, was a , and you see, it was a very good 'ouse fer livin', it was a good 'ouse. And the dinin' room, quite eight, nine in the dinin' room. It was a very 'ard 'ouse fer a young beginner like me. But still, I s'pose it was a good thing. I started in a hard place and never looked back, if you'd started easily, it'd upset you, wouldn't it.

Int. What was the cook like, was she a very hard task master?

H.G. Oh, some were nice and some were wretches, miserable, they led you a miserable life. One cook there was a very fat person, and I was just running all the time, fetch me this, do this, fetch me this, bring me this, oh I, goodness, I was racin' all the time. And the washing up was nobody's business!

Int. You had to clean the knives, I suppose.

H.G. No, the under gardener did the knives.

Int. How many staff did you have in the house?

H.G. There was the cook, and me was the kitchen maid and there was a butler. The butler was in the pantry, and an under parlourmaid and then there's two housemaids. When the family come home, there's one extra one to the nursery, and the chauffeur. There was the head gardener and another under gardener and a youngster, training, three, I think. In the house, there was a woman came in Fridays and helped upstairs doing the housework, and helped in the kitchen. There was alot o' scrubbin' 'cos there was alot o' passages and they were hard, they were red brick and it was hard work. It was a very, very hard house to work in.

Int. And very big in those days, much bigger.

H.G. Oh yes, all that wing 'as gone now.

Int. Did you have fun with the other staff?

H.G. We did, that's what kept life in us, yes we did, I suppose we made our fun, we made it. And when all was finished and we went to bed, we had to toil our way right to the top of the 'ouse, under the roof.

Int. What time did you get up in the morning?