

The Carter Family

Try as I might I have been unable to go any farther back than William Carter, another Great, Great Grandfather in one census he is shown as having been born in North Marston in 1783, and in another just in the County of Bucks. In the 1851 census there is a William Carter in Marston of just the right age but born in Stone. He is living with his son born John who was born in Marston. These seem to be the most likely entry but I can find nothing in Stone, although there are lot of Carters there. He is shown as a 'Dealer' and later a 'Carrier'. He married Elizabeth who was born in Marston in 1788, and neither can I find who she was. Her occupation was 'Lacemaker'.

Life must have been hard in those days, with no running water, sewers, cooking on an open fire, and lighting by candle or oil lamp. Farm labouring or agricultural labouring must have been a hard grind. There were no modern labouring saving appliances. Ploughing would have meant struggling behind a horse trying to keep the plough straight, milking by hand, reaping with a scythe, hay making all done manually, etc. and after a hard day's work perhaps miles to walk home in all weathers. I know that my Great, Great Grandfather, Mark Henley worked at one time on a Quainton farm and had to walk over the hills twice a day.

I don't know where William and Elizabeth lived, except that it was in Marston. He would have known John Henley, not realising that the two families would become entwined in later years. They had five sons:

MICHAEL was born in 1814 and emigrated to Australia.

WILLIAM was born in 1817. I will set out what I have found about his family

LUKE was born in 1819. He was known as Uncle Luck

JOHN was born in 1823.

MARK, my Great Grandfather, was born in 1825

Crammer, Crotal, Paddle and Chad

John Fidler visits an exhibition of village bygones

During the half term holiday an exhibition of village bygones was arranged in Drayton Parslow School, The idea came from village Wing Airport Resistance Association members. News of the venture quickly spread and soon outhouses, barns, attics and granny's old chest of drawers were scoured for all those things that had almost been forgotten. After many hours of painstaking care exhibits were mounted and arranged for the opening on 27th October. Drayton had not seen such an exhibition before. All facets of village life had a place and visitors were constantly amazed at the variety of things to be found

among the six hundred or so items on view.

Cottage industries

Village worthies of Victoria's time had an airing among the gallery of pictures which were so carefully presented. Many of the families there may still be found among Drayton folk of course. About a century ago there were 468 people there and most of them worked in the village which was almost a self-sufficient community. In those far off days many women were kept busy working methodically at their lace pillows or weaving straw bonnets.

Both these crafts were represented and one of the most unusual exhibits was the moss covered bonnet pattern (28) which came straight from the rockery! It is easy to forget that straw bonnets were made here and then sent to Luton which usually gets all the credit for hats. Children too were frequently employed in both lacemaking and straw plaiting in the days before the 1870 Education Act made school compulsory.

The work of plaiting straw was a meticulous task and a minute tool was used to split straws into four equal parts. Rather larger gadgets with rollers made entirely of wood were employed to crush straw and two fine specimens of straw crushers could be seen.

Another delightful exhibit was a lace trimmed christening gown dating from 1861. Such things get handed down and antique gowns have been used in very recent years for many family christenings.

The domestic scene

The domestic items included several small beer glasses—children's size!—and a number of pewter drinking mugs. There was also a fine model Victorian cooking stove. Those long-forgotten pop bottles were also to be seen and they must have conjured up many memories of boyhood among the spectators. Who has not wantonly broken such a bottle for the sake of the gobstopper (marble) that rattled within? One of the oldest exhibits (seventeenth century) was a wooden riddy pole which was fixed across the chimney so that the riddy pull could be hung over the fire. There was a riddy pull too with a large copper kettle attached to its hook. From a later period came a slender blue glass rolling pin that no doubt was once someone's wedding present. We take a water supply for granted these days but the well hook (6) was a reminder of the time when household water had to be fetched from the well in buckets. An ingenious spring clip held the bucket handle securely so that it could not be lost in the depths. Once upon a time there must have been many poles of this kind in use in Drayton. Another interesting item from the kitchen was a wooden spoon (19) made all of a piece.

The allotment was an important feature of the Victorian rural homestead and the boot irons on show were strapped to the (usually right) foot to protect the boot leather from wear. They had clearly seen a lot of use. Allotments were frequently dug hereabouts with the help of an open spade

(digging iron) (26) which did not get clogged up even when used on wet clay. Various tools and lasts associated with boot making could be seen and it is a fair guess to suggest that some of them were used by certain William Toe—the village boot and shoemaker in the 1860-80 period. Chickens were also part of the domestic economy and the curious earthenware chicken drinker (30) with its minute trough at the base is a superb example of functional design.

Tradesmen

The village tradesmen played an important part in village life and one of them had a special service to perform—baking. There was a time when the village baker used to cook nearly all the Sunday dinners in the parish. You took your joint and vegetables into the bakery on your way to church and collected them when you returned on your way home. A good many loaves must have ridden upon the baker's paddle (18). Mrs. Elizabeth London was the village baker in 1864 and Thomas London had followed her by the 1880's. William Smith—the blacksmith in the 1860's—no doubt had a busy time. In his day a blacksmith was expected to provide all kinds of door catch (7) is (he kind of thing he produced to order. A good many tools came from the blacksmith who followed long established tradition in the designs he used. Stephen Green was the blacksmith in 1887.

Keeping a cottage dry was an important matter and in Drayton you will find thatch and tile employed. There was a good display of thatcher's tools and the comb (29) was one of two specimens on view. Bricks and tiles were once made at Stewkley (see Bucks Life January 1968) and many must have found their way to Drayton. One ridge tile on display had a particular claim to one's attention, it bean an inscription (20) indicating that Joseph Miller finished a roof on) 3th August. 1767. By the time of Queen Victoria's Jubilee there was a regular carrier—Thomas Viccars—who made the journey to Leighton Buzzard twice a week on Thursday and Friday. William

and Joseph Tattam were the millers at that time and a picture of their steam mill was to be seen. One exhibit drawn by a present scholar at the school was a map giving the mill's position as well as a good deal of other information too. History at Drayton Parslow School seems to follow a meaningful path. Children enjoy going to school these days of course and an exhibit from the early years of this century was a certificate for a year's unbroken attendance. Perhaps



the tradition of enjoyment began when Charles Jolly was the schoolmaster

in 1887.

The village of Drayton Parslow, drawn by Norman Tennant for a Christmas card which it being sold to raise money for the Wing Airport Resistance

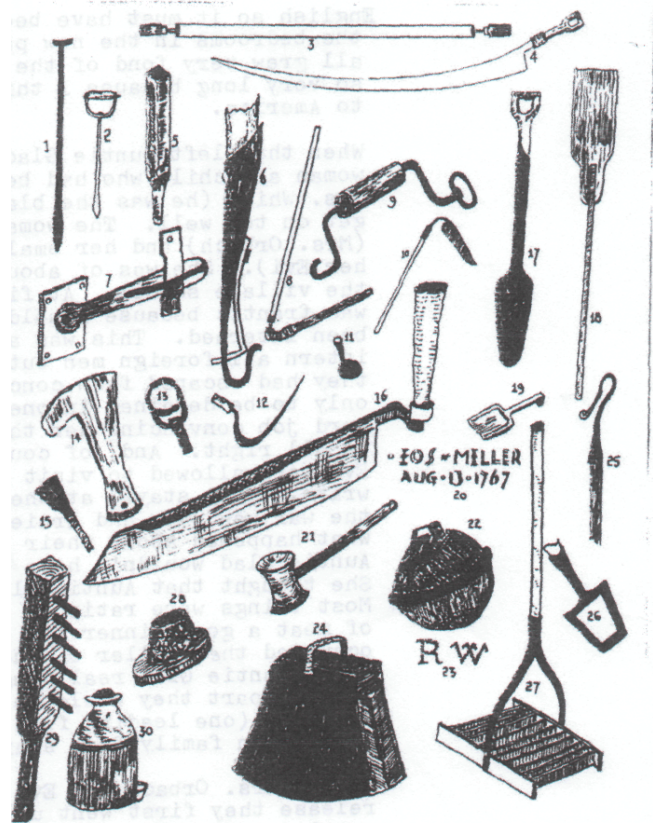
Some of the exhibits on show: See article for explanations:

On the farm

Work on the farm is never finished and many of the exhibits were associated with various aspects of agriculture. There was a large seed lip which was used for broadcasting seed— in the Biblical fashion—and a number of dibblers (1, 2) which were used for setting peas or potatoes among other things. Well drained fields were essential for good crops and there were numerous drainage and hedging tools including: the chad (17) used for digging a narrow channel or post hole, the crummer or swan neck (10) which could scoop up earth from a ditch and the post hole ladle (11) for clearing debris from the bottom of a hole. Paddies for spudding weeds (14, 15) often follow the thistle-shape pattern which was so very common all over England. Various harvest tools were present including a rather beautiful scythe and the wooden stickle (5) used for whetting it, which was smeared with grease and sand when a new edge was required during mowing. The sickle (12) was used in harvest time by womenfolk but they did not get to grips with the flail (8) which remained exclusively man's work. The handle was made of ash but the shorter arm was often of holly or hawthorn. This part was known as the swingel and it seldom lasted more than two seasons although a handle was permanent. The hay band twister (9) called for certain dexterity in use and few men these days know how the task was performed.

Fodder once had to be prepared by hand and the splendid chaff cutter on show was of the kind in use in the early 1800*s. The straw knife (4) the hay knife (16) and the turnip cutter (27) must have required a firm hand and an accurate eye when in use!

The farm horse was indispensable before the machine age and great care was lavished upon it. A sweat scraper (3) with its brilliant brass blade was among the outstanding animal husbandry exhibits which included some hone brasses. A device (13) which was placed in the horse's mouth so that a hand could be inserted to administer pills is beyond praise for



its ingenuity. Sheep folds were erected with the help of the concave hurdle hammer (21) and the crook (25) was always part of the shepherd's gear. Sheep bells have a history of their own. The cannister bell (24) was blacksmith made; but the nimbler or crotal bell (22) is rare in this county—it is usually found in Sussex. Those displayed bore the initials of Robert Wells of Aldbourne, Wilts, who ceased work in 1825. All those who made the exhibition such a splendid success are to be congratulated. Their efforts deserved to reach a far wider public. What a pity Bucks lacks a Folk Life Museum where such an exhibition could be staged.

MARK CARTER, my Great Grandfather, was born in 1824. He was a Farm worth Marston in Labourer and in the 1861 census a Carrier, probably carrying on a business after his father. Did they own their own horse and cart? If so that was quite an achievement, I don't know much about him and neither did Mum. She was only a few months old when he died in 1885. (? 1887)

He married **ANN NORTH** of Granborough who was born there in 1823. Following this I have set out what I have found about her family tree. They married in Granborough Parish Church in 1844 and lived for a time in Granborough where their first child, **ALFRED**, was born in 1845. Soon after, they must have moved to North Marston because their next child, **ELIZABETH**, was born there in 1847. I don't know in which cottage they lived then but by 1856 when my Grandfather was born they were living at the Brambles

I think that Ann North was a bit of a character; in her time the Brambles was all one house. The far room was known as the parlour and the small narrow room in between that and the 'house' (as the living rooms were always called) would then have gone from back to front of the cottage with a window at both ends. This was known as the Lacehouse (pronounced Leah-sus) and here she held a lacemaking school which the village girls would attend. I expect that she was an excellent Lacemaker. This and bringing up nine children must have been a hard job.

At some time they left the Brambles and moved to the Armed Yeoman public house which they managed for some years. I feel that they must have moved before Mark's death, but I don't know. (I have since been able to establish that Mark managed the Armed Yeoman before his death)

During her time at the Armed Yeoman Ann apparently owned a mangle and she would mangle other people's things or let them use it themselves for a fee. Whether this was something special or whether it was unusual to own a mangle, I don't know. I do know, however, that it was unusual or important enough to be mentioned in the Schorne College Magazine.

After many years alone at the Armed Yeoman she went to live with her son Gaius in the Little House I have mentioned before overlooking the village green. Then, as well as Ann, there would have been living there, Aunt Agnes, Uncle Gay, Vic, Siddle, Beatie and Gertie. How did they manage with one room and a scullery down, and two bedrooms up.

Mum never talked about her Grandmother Carter as she did her Grannie Henley. I think that she wasn't very fond of her. Perhaps it was the same situation as with Gramma - Charles Mum's father being dead any special contact was gone.

Ann died in 1913 at the age of 90.

Page 5 **Note: Ann North's Family Tree requires to be added here**

MARK and ANN had nine Children

ALFRED CARTER, born in Granborough in 1845, married Ruth Coker, and they lived in what we knew as Joe Warr's house, a rather picturesque cottage which stood sideways to the road in Quaiton Road before reaching the Brambles, but which unfortunately was demolished years ago. They had three children:

EDITH, born in 1866, married Henry Cheshire and for some years lived in the Bakehouse (bake-us). They had eleven children, nine daughters and two sons both of whom were killed in the First World War. There is a small stained glass window in Marston church to them.

She was hated by Mum's family. Sometime in late 1913 or early 1914 there had been a function on the village green and I don't know if there was an argument then or whether it was something which happened before, but Edith in her temper punched Mildred Ann (my Grandmother) in the back, knocking her down. Edith was her niece by marriage. This incident, according to Mum's family, was the cause of their mother's last illness. What the unprejudiced view of it is I cannot know.

Many years after 'Old Edith' lived just across the road from Gramma at the beginning of Portway. They became friendly and visited one another. Perhaps this is another reason why Gramma was not liked by Mum's family. If Mum or Auntie Glad visited Gramma and found Edith there they never spoke - completely ignored her, sometimes waiting outside until she had gone.

STEPHEN married Elly Y and moved away from Marston.

ALFRED (Young Alf) being the youngest stayed at home with his father after his mother's death. Mum's family were very fond of him and he spent a lot of time at the Brambles. He played an instrument in the Marston Band, and there is a photograph, of him. In 1908 when he 28, was for some unknown reason, he committed suicide - hanged himself in the barn at the back of the house which was on the road. I believe that at times his mother was mentally disturbed and spent some time in an asylum, so perhaps it was something hereditary.

After this Uncle Alf lived alone, a broken old man. Mum used to go every day and 'do' for him. I have never I heard that daughter Edith did very much so perhaps there was bad feeling there. When he died in 1912, Mum took a small glass jug and bowl of no value as a keepsake. She had no

payment for all the help she had given Uncle Alf and could have justifiably have claimed more. Edith accused her of stealing her father's things, so perhaps there was friction with Edith before the attack on Mildred Ann the following year.

ELIZABETH, born 1847, married George Buckingham. They had six children.

THOMAS, born 1850, married Polly and had two sons and a daughter.

MARY, born 1852, and was known as Poll. She married Joseph Turner and lived somewhere in London. She often came to Marston and stayed with her brother Uncle Gay and Aunt Agnes. She always brought with her a girl called Mary and I never knew who she was, there was always a bit of a mystery. In my researches, however, I have found that a Mary Carter living in worth Marston of the same age as; Aunt Poll who had a daughter called Laura, born in 1870. Was this Aunt Poll? And could Mary have been her granddaughter?

FREDERICK, born in 1854, married Jane Cox and they had eleven children, I believe that they lived somewhere in Portway. **NELLY**, the eldest daughter, married William Clarke of Oving. They had three daughters and lived in the house next to Oving windmill. Mum and I sometimes visited them when we were staying at the Brambles. Cathy, the youngest daughter, is the one I remember.

Fred died in 1912.

CHARLES, born on the 28th June 1856, was my Grandfather. He was born at the Brambles, which at that time was all one cottage. It was probably his home until shortly before his marriage, although the only reference that I can find in the census is in 1861 when he was four years old. In 1871, at the age of 14, he must have been working away from home.

By 1881 he was living at the Swinton Dairy, Swinton Street, in the Grays Inn Road area of London, having married Mildred Ann Henley on the 27th November 1879, both of Swinton Dairy. They were both the same age, born on the same day, one at the Brambles and the other in the next house down the road. I will continue their story after their marriage.

LEWIS, born 1859, died a young man.

JOHN, (Uncle Jack) born in 1860 at the Brambles, married Julia Dudley of North Marston. After his mother and father moved to the Armed Yeoman, they lived at the Brambles for some time. When my grandparents moved there after Jack's departure, they found Julia had kept Chickens in the big bedroom of all things and there was a dreadful mess to clear up. Uncle Jack and Aunt Jool, as she was always known, then lived in the house at the bottom of the school hill and kept a bit of a green grocers shop.

I remember them taking over the lovely field next to the Brambles and turning it into a rubbish dump. They built a Dutch barn on the boundary which shut off the view of the Quainton hills. Some of the rubbish was

kept in the barn, and an electric saw which they used to cut up trees and railway sleepers into logs for sale. The rest of the rubbish (something of everything) was scattered all over the field. They had an old lorry in which they went around the villages collecting more and more rubbish.

Aunt Jool looked like an old gypsy tramping up and down the road. Uncle Jack looked respectable. They were joined by whichever of their children remained in the village - always Bernard and Violet and sometimes Basil and Jack. They had nine children and the following are some of them.

MAY, married Arthur Hughes (Uncle Fred's brother). They had four children. Ivy, the third child, used to spend a lot of time in Marston staying with her grandparents. She was very like her grandmother and at times looked like her in dress.

EVELYN married a Welshman, Walter Jones. They lived in Llanelli and had five children. I remember them coming to Marston and the eldest daughter, LILIAN, known as Win, doing a jockey dance at some function in the village hall.

DAISY married Pat Higgins and lived in Stewkley. They had no children. We went there to tea once, as I will relate later.

VIOLET remained single and lived all her life in North Marsden. She worked in the yard and sometimes looked like another Gypsy, although when dressed was very smart and young looking and slim. She often wore trousers which was something in those days. In her later years she lived in one of the small cottages overlooked the Green, next to Aunt Agnes, a rather mean little place and she must have been worth a fortune she died in about 1989 well into her nineties.

JACK married Phyllis Clarke and they had three children, Thelma, Yvonne (always known as Shooky) and Raymond. They moved around a bit but at one time lived in Marston, but when they away used to come and stay with their grandparents. Nald, Iris and I became very friendly with Thelma and Shooky and I can remember the five of us going out walking all day. We took food for the day in haversacks and started off in fog to walk to Granborough, turned down Green End past the fox covert and then across the Turnpike. We crossed the fields to Hoggston and the intention was then to walk to Stewkley, but Thelma and Shooky realised that we were not far from a farm where they used to live, called Black something, which they wanted to show us. So off we went, which was rather out of our way. We then made for Stewkley where we went to see their Aunt Daisy (their father's sister). Here we stayed quite a time and had tea.

Time was getting on by now and we had a long way to go, so she insisted that we started for home. We walked across the fields to Dunton and by the time we were in sight of Marston it was beginning dark. Mum, Auntie Glad, Uncle Sid, Shooky's parents and others, worried because we had been gone for nearly twelve hours, were all staring across the field

which I believe is called Dick Tarn at the top of the village. There was apparently great relief all around when five figures appeared over the hill. The five of us were tired out but we had had a lovely day.

BASIL married Dolly Hopkins and had three children; Margaret married my cousin Denis Carter, Barbara, married Robin Harwood and still lives in Marston as does her brother Brian.

BERNARD married "Alice who came from London, a tall big woman. They lived for a long time with his parents and with Uncle Jack after Aunt Jool died. They had one child, Paddy. She was a slim, ginger haired, harum scarum and spent much time as she could with her Grandmother down in the rubbish dump and Dutch barn, and after her death with her father and Aunt Violet. I have heard that when a child one very hot day she was found undressed and sitting in the long tin bath which collected rainwater off the barn roof. It was green and slimy but she didn't care - the water was cool. Another time her Grandmother wanted her to get ready to go home to tea but she didn't want to go - didn't want any of those darned oddy-doddies for her tea. An oddy doddy is a snail with a shell - her tea was to have been winkles. She grew into a tall big woman.

She married Stan Gurney and lived in a largish house which stands back from the village green, next to the old bake-house, which I shall always think of as Lucy Tattam's house. Her parents by this time had moved into Portway Lodge, Grandma's old house, where Alice lived alone for many years after Bernard's death.

Paddy and Stan had five children has five children (Mark, Alison and ??.?). At one time they used one of the downstairs rooms as the Post Office but after many years gave it up. I believe that one of their sons still lives in the house, but Paddy and Stan made their home somewhere in Spain. How could she?

GAIUS CARTER, born in 1865, married *Agnes Henley and part of their story is included in The Henley Family No. 2. Gay was the baby of the family and was perhaps spoilt, but he was lazy and a bit of a failure. He seemed incapable of standing on his own two feet and was continually cadging off his brother Charles my Grandfather, and maybe others. Mum said that she had seen him following her father around, keeping on and on when he wanted something. Her mother used to say 'look at him following your Dad round and he will get what he wants in the end'. How Uncle Gay thought that his brother with nine children to support could afford to lend money I don't know. On more than one occasion, having borrowed the horse and cart, he returned with the horses knee broken and bleeding and the cart in a mess. Even when my Grandmother was a widow he borrowed from her.

At one time he worked as a gardener and odd job man at Schorne College and here earned himself the nickname of Bacchus, the Roman god of wine, because he drank too much.

As I remember him he didn't seem too bad an old man. He spent a lot of time in his allotment and this was his sole topic of conversation. He sold some of his produce, and often came to see Auntie Glad, hoping for a glass of her home made wine in exchange for some of his vegetables. She used to take them whether she wanted them or not, although she probably had more than enough of her own.

CHARLES AND MILDRED ANN CARTER

My grandfather was not a tall man, was blue-eyed, fresh complexioned, light brown haired and had a moustache and beard.

How long he had managed the Swinton Street Dairy before his marriage I do not know. I believe that their two eldest daughters, Sarah Ann and Lydia Maud were born there. I have always understood that after a time Auntie San was ailing and they were advised to leave London. By June 1883 they were back in North Marston.

My Grandparents first of all lived in one of the small terraced cottages set back from the road in Quainton Road near the Cross, four of them all down the one yard. Whether Auntie Kate and Auntie Alice were born there I do not know, but in December 1886 Mum was born at the Brambles. The family moved there after Uncle Jack and Aunt Jool moved out.

Charles Carter was a very handy man, successfully putting his hand to anything, and making improvements to the Brambles. He moved the small window in the room known as the dairy so that it looked out on to the garden and not onto the closet and pigsty, built a new brick closet, and installed the partitions, known as the screens, in the 'house' to shut off draughts from the stairs and front door. At some time this door had been in the back of the house, but I don't think that he made that alteration. There was a pair of cottages at the back of the Brambles then, but whether occupied or derelict I don't know, but the two-roomed cottage down the yard, next to the stable, was occupied. The room at one end of the Brambles (which his father called the parlour) was derelict and was blocked off from the main part. It was only fit to be used for storing chaff and hay, etc.

I have heard that it was said that Charlie Carter, had he lived longer would have made something of himself. When he first went back to Marston he worked as a Farm Labourer and later bought a horse and cart (had he been able to save money while in London) and on one side of the Brambles yard was a hovel and stable where he could keep them. Also next to the Brambles, and included in the property, was a small field, known as the cuckoo pen, where he was able to graze the horses. Many villages had their cuckoo pens where they used to try to net cuckoos but for what purpose I have forgotten.

My Grandfather started a coal business, driving the horse and cart to Winslow Road station, loading up with coal (I believe not in sacks but loose) which must have been a heavy job to shovel up. Then it was taken back to the Brambles, unloaded a bit at a time into the end room which

in Auntie Glad's time became the kitchen and where the sink was. He supplied Marston and the villages around, but once again it had to be shovelled up, weighed and sometimes sacked. The coal was kept in the house until the two-roomed cottage in the yard became derelict and then it was moved to the far room. Many years later, when the old cottage had been demolished, Uncle Sid lit a bonfire there. The ground became red hot, glowed and smoked. He tried to cool it down with water but all it did was steam. After some days it cooled down. The earth must have been full of coal dust from the many years in which coal had been stored there.

Apart from the coal business, Charles Carter had the animals to groom, the stable to keep clean, a large garden on which to cultivate vegetables, although I don't know how much of the half acre site was his, and nine children to support. There would also be chickens and a pig, but perhaps these weren't his responsibility. In spite of this he took an active part in village affairs, was a member of the Parish Council and a member of the committee which arranged Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee celebrations.

He had two odd expressions that I have been told about. He was 'right as a trivet' or 'lissom as a top', supposedly meaning he was very well.

He died in 1901 at the age of 45 as a result of blood poisoning. He had cut himself, I think when grooming one of the horses, the cut was neglected, blood poisoning followed. (Add - unreadable hand written text)

When he died Auntie Kate, Auntie Alice and Auntie Maud were away in Service. I don't know where Auntie San was. Mum, Uncle Nald Auntie Glad, Uncle Lew and Uncle Era were still at home - Mum 14 years of age and Uncle Era 5 years old. My Grandmother continued with the coal business to earn a living with Mum and Uncle Nald (12 years old) her chief helps. I know that she applied for Parish Relief and was told that she wasn't eligible unless she sold her horse and cart, her only means of livelihood. How stupid could the committee have been? There was, of course, no widow's pension then. She was an excellent Lacemaker and probably worked on this in her 'spare' time to supplement her income.

Uncle Nald had to grow up very quickly and the two younger boys had to help as soon as they reasonably could. Auntie Glad went into Service as soon as she was old enough, but Mum was the one to always stay at home to help.

In all I think that over the years they had four horses. They were Kit, Tommy, Little Kit and Dick who was I believe the last one. Tommy is the one I roust say something about. He was a bigish white horse (or I suppose I should say grey), a bit of a character and loved by all the family. When he was let out into the cuckoo pen he would race round and round the field like a mad thing, scaring anybody who saw him. It was thought that he could possibly have come from a circus before my Grandfather bought him. Once when there was a function on the village green,

perhaps the Feast, he recognised a tune which was being played and much to everybody's delight began to dance. He must have been a gentle and playful old thing, one day Auntie Maud was in charge of him when he was grazing on the road side. She was sitting with her back to him but was in his way, so he just picked her up and deposited her in the ditch. Another time Mum was asleep .lust inside the Brambles doorway with the door open. She vaguely heard his hooves clattering on the pitching, looked up and he was standing over her having a look inside. She called out 'Go back Tommy, go back' and he gently stepped over her and backed out.

When he got too old to work my Grandmother was forced to sell him because she couldn't afford to keep him. The men who took him away got as far as Oving and decided to stay the night there. Tommy got loose and galloped back home to Marston, baring his teeth at anyone who tried to stop him. It soon got round the village that Tommy Carter was home and many went down to see him. But he had to go. It must have been heart-breaking for them all to have to say goodbye for a second time. Poor old horse, I hope that he was treated kindly. Where did they take him; to the knacker's yard I suppose. After he went Mum went up to the stable and collected all the white hairs she could find, and I still have them in a little round box upstairs.

The family struggled on with the coal business, with the help of the younger boys who had now grown up, although I know that they had farm labouring jobs as well. My Grandmother by now wasn't a healthy woman and had to rely on the boys more and more. One day in the spring of 1914 she climbed the hill to Oving to visit her eldest daughter, Auntie San and her family - she had two daughters by now and possibly a baby boy or was expecting. Whether trudging up the steep hill was too much for her, or whether it was anything to do with 'Old Edith1, as I have already recounted, I don't know, but she was taken ill on the way back to Marston, couldn't get as far as the Brambles, and so went to her sister, Sarah Ann, at the nearer end of the village. Here she died, never getting back home.

After their mother died, my uncles carried on with the coal business, and I think that at that time Auntie Glad, the only single sister, came home to look after them. Eventually they were one by one called up for war service and the horse and cart were sold.

CHARLES AND MILDRED ANN had nine children:

SARAH ANN CARTER was born in 1880

Once back in the country her health improved. She was blue-eyed and auburn haired and had a sweet singing voice. Spent a lot of time with her Grannie and Gramp Henley and when more brothers and sisters arrived she slept at her Grannie's. I don't know if she ever went into Service or whether she worked for someone in the village - Chapman is a name that comes to mind.

She married Frank Bates of North Marston and moved to Oving. I remember them first living in a house at the top of Oving Hill - it was the end house of a small terrace of about four. She always seemed a frail little thing but perhaps her appearance was deceptive. After all she had four children and coped with them when Uncle Frank was called up in the First World War. Elsie could well have been born while he was away.

Later they moved into a Council house. When they first went there it was the end one of a row of detached houses with open country all round. I can remember going to see her when she was poorly in bed. She died during the Second World War. Uncle Frank lived alone for a few years. They are both buried in Oving churchyard. Their four children were:

MILDRED ELIZABETH (BESS) was born, I suppose, in Oving in about 1910. I believe that she was the first grandchild and was made much of down at Marston. She was particularly fond of her Uncle Ern and would go hand in hand up the road with him. One day to tease her someone pretended to attack her Uncle and she turned to him and said 'Hold me my man' (which meant lift her up) as though in this way she could protect him. She was fairly tall and very dark haired.

Before her marriage to Frank Williams they often came down to the Brambles on Saturday or Sunday afternoons to tea. On more than one occasion they walked across the fields to Granborough Road Station with Auntie Glad, Uncle Sid and Iris to meet us off the train. They were married in Oving Methodist Chapel and Mum, Wald and I went to the wedding - we happened to be staying at the Brambles at the time. She often seemed to be ailing but perhaps she was stronger than she looked. After Frank died it was said that hundreds of pound notes were found in old cocoa tins in the shed where he had hidden them, I wonder if this is true. Some years after Bess died too. I'm not sure where they lived, but Haddenham comes to mind.

KATHLEEN GLADYS (KIT) was born in about 1912 in Oving. She also seemed to be tallish, very slim, blue-eyed, and real carrot red hair - a lovely colour. When Daddy died and Mum had to go out to work, Kit came to live with us in Bow, supposedly to help in the house and look after Nald and me while Mum was out. She couldn't have been more than about fourteen. I think that this was Auntie Kate's idea. How Mum was supposed to keep three children I don't know. She furnished the box room for Kit but it didn't work out. I don't see how it could have - shut up in the house on her own for so many hours a day. I remember that once she asked where the fields were. She couldn't understand that there could be a place with no open country.

She courted and later married Johnny Deverill from Weedon. They too used to come down to Auntie Glad's on Saturdays or Sundays to tea, and they too walked across the fields to Granborough Road Station to meet us and help carry our luggage. I can also remember them at the Brambles at Christmas time joining in noisy games. Kit and John always seemed such opposites - she was so quiet and he was noisy, playing tricks and making us all laugh. When they married they lived in Weedon. He got to know

when I was getting married decided he would invite himself and did.

Many years later Kit must have been terribly disturbed mentally (I believe that she hadn't been herself for some time) because one winter's day she got out of bed early one morning wandered out into the garden and drowned herself in a rainwater tank. I wonder if she meant to or if she fell in and couldn't get out. If it was deliberate, what a state she must have been in, poor girl. Johnny eventually married again and still lives in Weedon.

WILLIAM CHARLES, born about 1914, was dark haired like his sister Bess, and I always thought quite good looking. He married Molly Weatherhead and they had two daughters. Soon after his marriage they both came to the Brambles to tea one Sunday winter afternoon. That was the only time that I saw Molly. He was very new to marriage and kept us in fits telling us about all the funny things they had found out about each other. After some years the marriage broke up. I wonder what went wrong. I saw him many years after that at Iris's and didn't recognise him. Not long after he died, I felt long before his time.

ELSIE MAY, like her sister Bess, was slim and very dark haired. She was very friendly with May Young whose father and brother, and sometimes May herself, used to go round the villages with a horse and cart selling vegetables and fruit, Elsie married John Weatherhead, brother to Molly, and they live in Sutton, Surrey. They had two children, Sheila is married with a son, David. Roger has recently married. Roger and John used to visit Uncle Lew at Ewell and in the home in Banstead - he was very fond of them both.

LYDIA MAUD CARTER was born in 1881 in London in the district of Marylebone and lived for the first years of her life in the Swinton street Dairy. Then her parents moved back to north Marston where she grew up. She went to the village school but only until she was twelve years of age. In those days if it was judged that a pupil had reached a certain standard they were allowed to leave.

When she was old enough Auntie Maud went into Service. I think that she could have gone to her Aunt Clara who kept a boarding house in Eastbourne, but I am not sure. But she certainly was in Eastbourne and Burnaby's near Great Missenden is another place where she might have worked. She was about twenty years of age when her father died.

She was a fairly good looking girl dark haired and blue eyed, and very forthright in her manner. In later life, at least, she was a demon for cleaning and washing and would rather do housework than cook. She met and married Walter Taylor who came from near Hooe in Sussex in 1912. They were married in Marston church. It was a big wedding and I can never understand how this came about. So far as I know none of her sisters did. I have a large photograph of the bride, groom, bridesmaids and all the guests taken in the field opposite the Brambles, but it is too large to include in this album.

They first of all lived in an upstairs flat in Charlton, south London. We used to visit fairly often as a bus went from Bow, through the Blackwall Tunnel, to Blackheath. I hated the tunnel - every time we went through I was ill, looked green in colour and was sometimes sick. I think that it was the smell of the petrol fumes in the enclosed space, although I was then a bad traveller. Once when we were visiting I remember walking to Blackheath where there was a big fair -probably Easter or August Bank holiday. And on one occasion there were crowds trying to get home - queuing wasn't known then - there was just a horrible scramble to get on the bus with the old and slow not standing a chance. Mum, Nald and I managed to get on but Daddy had to walk all the way home.

Sometimes Auntie Maud, Uncle Walt, Edna, Ernie and Vera came to see us in Bow. Wald didn't like Ernie coming because almost as soon as they arrived, Ernie made for the 'play cupboard' in the corner of our back room, and in seconds everything was out on the floor. Nald said that Ernie Taylor always broke something of his. After Daddy died, Mum had a 'limiter' attached to the electric lights so that we could not use too much electricity when we were on our own. If more than three lights were switched on at any one time, they flickered rapidly and made a clicking sound. One of the first things Ernie did then was to switch four lights on starting the flickering. He really was a bit of a pest.

Uncle Walt was a carpenter on the Southern Railway. I don't believe that he was called up during the First World War but I don't know why. Not long after Daddy died he was moved to Tonbridge. I remember Auntie Maud telling us that they would be near the county. How envious I was. It was sad for Mum, she had lost Daddy and now the only sister she could visit easily was moving. They lived at No. 15 Albert Road which backed onto Tonbridge Station. They had a small garden. It was a fairly big house with a front room, back room, living room, kitchen and a small scullery beyond that, three bedrooms and a roomy attic. Some years after they moved in, it was decided to lengthen or enlarge Tonbridge Station and they lost the scullery and some of their garden.

We stayed there sometimes at Easter and at Christmas time. There was a lot of shunting and clanking on the railway, especially at night. Auntie Maud and family not notice the noise but we always found it difficult to sleep. At times I was down there on my own, Mum having gone back, to work and Nald with her. Then we used to sleep three in a bed - Edna, Vera and me in the middle. Auntie Maud never let me travel back to London on my own and always sent Ernie with me. By far the longest part of the, journey was from London Bridge Station to Bow, which should have taken about half an hour. We used to spend a long long time on the Bridge watching all the activity on the river, unloading and loading cargo from the ships -from all over the world. That was how the Pool of London was in those days, and then there was the Monument. After leaving the Bridge the only way to Bow was up the Monument, down again, and at last into the underground.

Once, an old uncle and aunt of Uncle Walt's went to live with them. They

had what was always known as Ernie's room for their bedroom and I believe the front room downstairs. Then I think was when the attic was furnished as a bedroom. Uncle Walt was a queer man. I could never make much of him, although he was nice enough. Auntie Maud made a bit of a fool of him, waiting on him, cutting up his food, stirring his tea etc. She must have liked doing it otherwise she wouldn't have - she was very forthright and feel she didn't suffer fools gladly.

Auntie Maud died very suddenly with heart trouble - I can't remember whether Uncle Walt lived alone or with Edna/Vera. I feel that the contents of the house were disposed of very quickly and the house given up. One day, without warning Uncle Walt arrived in Bow with a few things from the house and an old oil lamp which I had admired and which had stood on a table in their hallway. I loved the lamp but had been told by Auntie Maud that it was to be for Ernie, so we never used it and on one visit to England Ernie took it away.

After Auntie Maud died, Uncle Walt went down to Marston fairly often and here he expected the same treatment from Auntie Glad that he used to get from Auntie Maud. He didn't get his tea stirred, etc., and it used to make Auntie Glad furious that he expected it. After some years he got friendly with an elderly lady who was Vera's next door neighbour's mother and in the end went to live with her. I don't think that they married.

Auntie Maud and Uncle Walt had three children:

MILDRED EDNA, was born in Charlton in 1914. She was blue-eyed and had straight chest nutty colour hair which she always kept very short - almost manish when the fashion was for waves and curls. But I don't think that fashion ever worried her much. She worked for many years in a dairy in Tonbridge where I think that they thought a lot of her. She brought things home from the dairy - I always remember the cream. The dairy people I think were called Tutt and had one small son whom Edna became very fond of. His name was John. She brought him home often and he made himself very much at home, drawing his chair up to the table when he realised that there was food around. Unfortunately he had a rather deformed head, it having been pulled out of shape with tongs at birth. He used to call ne 'Mildew'. Many many years later when he was grown up with children of his own I met him again and there seemed to be very little wrong with his appearance.

Edna married Fred Blunden and they lived in a small council house in Tonbridge. I can't remember whether he went into the Army or not. After the War I think that he drove coaches for a living. He died years before his time. Edna many years later contracted Multiple Sclerosis and died in her early sixties. Their daughters were:

MURIEL was small like our Mild I've heard it said) and auburn haired. She married a Tonbridge boy and they emigrated to Canada. After some years he changed his sex and their marriage was dissolved. She stayed on in Canada and later met and married Cecil Walsof (I believe that he

is of Polish extraction). They now live in Langley, British Columbia and have one daughter, Shana. I have never met Murial but we correspond.

FRANCES still lives in the council house where she was brought up. She is a short sturdy girl. I met her at her cousin Susan's wedding and her mother's funeral. She married Ian Card and they have two daughters, Lianne and Jessica.

ERNEST VICTOR was born in 1916 in Charlton. He is tall, taking after his father's family, and perhaps a little bit of Tattam. He was the clever one of the family and won a scholarship to Judd's School in Tonbridge. Judd also founded the Tonbridge School. He couldn't find a job to his liking in Tonbridge, and once went around for a long time with an organ tuner. They went all over the County, even to Canterbury Cathedral. He then joined the Palestine Police and signed on for a certain number of years and the period expired during the Second World War. He decided to stay on in Palestine until the war was over. There he met and married Rose Singer. She was partly Jewish, the daughter of a Russian and a Palestinian. After the war they came back to Tonbridge where they had to stay with Auntie Maud. They didn't get on at all well - I suppose that she didn't understand their ways and customs and they didn't understand hers. One Sunday afternoon Ernie brought her unexpectedly to Bow. She was pregnant then. She didn't seem too bad, and when she left said that it had been the happiest afternoon since she had come to England. Not long after she gave birth to a daughter, Sylvia. It became obvious that Ernie wasn't going to get a job in Tonbridge and things weren't working out at home, so they decided to emigrate to America, and settled in Bell Gardens near Los Angeles, California. Rose had some relatives out there and I think that they helped to begin with. Ernie became a truck driver, a clever fellow with a decent education, but it paid well. See cutting

(I'm afraid that the cutting; has been lost. If referred to Vic Taylor who had had his truck hi-jacked by a man with a gun. Vic(Ernie) was forced to drive at gun point for miles and miles and thought that his end had come. How he got away I'm afraid that I can't remember but the even made news headlines in an American paper.)

Ernie and Rose had two more children, Cynthia and Bruce, and so far as I know still live in the same bungalow. They have been back to England visiting, came to Bow and to Marston when we were on holiday there. My friend Doris and I spent a fortnight with them in Bell Gardens in 1985 - They made us very welcome and we both grew to be very fond of Rose. Their three children were:

SYLVIA, who was a little fair haired girl when she left England, married and had three sons: Paul, Brian and Kirk. She died a very young woman of cancer, after a long and horrible illness. Her husband had left before her death and the three boys were then in the care of Ernie and Rose. They have been a great deal of trouble to them.

CYNTHIA (CINDY), very like her father in her ways, married 'Ron Sekkel

and they live in Felton, near San Francisco. I do not know what he does for a living but Cindy I believe manages a hotel. They came to Bell Gardens when we were there to meet us. We had hoped to be able to see them when we were in San Francisco but that had proved to be impossible. We have exchanged Christmas cards ever since.

BRUCE seemed to be a nice affectionate lad. He hasn't married and lives in a suburb of Los Angeles with his three nephews. They are able to get on with him better than with their Grandfather. It was a nice house, rather oddly furnished, or perhaps too modern by our standards, with a large swimming pool. Bruce worked for one of the American airlines, and helped us with our trip to Las Vegas and the Grand Canyon. He has since lost his job, so what he does now I do not know.

VERA KATHLEEN TAYLOR, was born in Charlton in 1918. She was blue eyed but fairer than her sister, and the quieter one of the family. I don't know a lot about her, not like Edna and Ernie -I saw so much more of them at Marston. During the Second World War she married Bill Werren and lived with Auntie Maud until after the War when they found a place of their own. Bill wasn't in the forces much to his regret. He had failed his medical-I don't know why. But Vera was called up and sent (not in uniform) to the airfield at Littlehampton to train as an Electricians Mate. I believe she was released when she and Bill were married.

Bill worked at Tonbridge School, as did his father before him. It was his life and in conversation somehow, and you never quite knew how, you always got round to the school.

They still live in Tonbridge and Bill is now retired. They used to visit Uncle Lew in the flat at Ewell and afterwards in the home at Banstead. Uncle Lew, in his old age, became so rude and shouted at his visitors that at one time Bill drove Vera there but wouldn't go inside. I can't say that I blame him, but it must have been awkward for Vera. I wonder what explanation she made. Bill and Vera had two children:

SUSAN married Clive Jeffrey and has a daughter, still living in Tonbridge. I went to her wedding and that was the first time I saw our Edna in a wheelchair - that was a shock.

MICHAEL has a common law wife and a small daughter, living I believe in Orpington.

FRANCES KATE CARTER was born on the 29th June 1883 in North Marston. I don't know at what age she left school but perhaps she was allowed to stay on until she was fourteen. She went into Service, first of all with her mother's sister, Clara, in Eastbourne. She kept a boarding house. I know that she and Auntie Maud were both in Eastbourne at the same time but not working in the same place. Once there was some trouble between Auntie Kate and Aunt Clara, Uncle Joe and Auntie Maud but it is not clear what it was all about, but I have a letter which my Grandmother wrote to her 'brother' Joe supporting Kate and Maud and telling Clara to send Kate home. For a woman who could not have had a lot of schooling,

and written in agitation, it is a fine letter.

It seems to me that Auntie Kate was also connected with Burnaby's of Great Missenden and perhaps that is where she met Ern Higgin. His home was in Missenden. They carried and first of all lived in Lebanon Road, East Croydon. Uncle Ern worked in the railway offices there. I don't know why he was not called up in the First World War. Nald and I used to stay with them there and once Doris Christopher came too.

Auntie Kate was always interested in clothes and appearance, made her own clothes and altered things to fit her. This interest must almost have been born in her because when a very small girl, not yet able to talk properly, she was showing off a dress to a girl who lived in the two roomed cottage by the Brambles and was heard to proudly say 'Loot at my belbet dress Lil Nootat'

There was some trouble about money while Uncle Ern was working in Croydon (I think that he used to bet heavily on the horses) and he was transferred to Brighton. I believe too that he was too fond of the ladies and once when on East Croydon station Mum and I saw him with a woman (it could all have been harmless) but Mum hurried away not wanting to see or be seen. Sometimes we stayed in Brighton at Easter time and we had one summer holiday there. It was all right but I used to look out of the bedroom window at the grounds of Brighton College opposite and think what was I was doing there when I should have been down at Marston. I spent a great deal of time standing looking at Dick Sheppard's Concert Party on the front with a lot of other children. I thought that the girls in the concert part were marvellous and I expect imagine myself as one of them. However, I was brought down to earth one evening when Mum was putting my hair up in rags for the night and found my hair full of nits. The first and only time in my life that I have been lousy. I think that my hair was dowsed in paraffin which smelt terrible, but it got rid of the lice and nits. I didn't go so often to the concert party after that.

At the time of the money troubles in Croydon Mum lent Auntie Kate money to put things straight and help in the cost of the move to Brighton. She paid Mum back a little at a time, and Mum kept an account of it. Where did she get the money to lend?

When Daddy died and Mum had to go out to work, Auntie Kate used to come to Bow every Monday to help with the washing when Mum was there and got on with it herself when Mum was at work, normally Nald and I had to come home from school at midday and get ourselves something; to eat, but it was different when Auntie Kate came, We looked forward to it so. She used to laugh at us when sometimes she was late arriving and we would be scrambling an egg or something but as soon as heard the key in the door we would say 'here she is' and down tools immediately. She always sent a postal order for our birthdays and at Christmas time - she couldn't have been very well off.

Uncle Ern retired they went to live for a time with his parents at South

Heath, Great Missenden - I think it was called Hawthorn Cottage. After a time they were able to find a house a little way along the same road called 'Sunnyglade' and moved in. it was a nice house with a big garden which Uncle Era kept beautifully, even in his very old age. There were two rooms and a small kitchen downstairs and three bedrooms up. Outside the kitchen there was a small greenhouse built against the wall. After some years they had a way knocked through the hall wall and had a garage built (heavens knows why a garage because they never owned a car) and a bathroom.

During the war when people were advised to leave the south coast, Aunt Clara and her daughter Eva left Eastbourne and stayed with Auntie Kate for some time. Mum and I used to go there as often as we could at weekends to get away from the air raids. When Aunt Clara was there we stayed with Uncle Ern's cousin who lived in a bungalow on the ground adjoining Auntie Kate's at the back of their garden. I should be able to remember their name, but it's gone. There was a gap in the hedge and we had to creep through to get to the bungalow. Also during the war Girlie (Auntie Alice's daughter) stayed with Auntie Kate for some time. She was called up to do work in connection with ammunitions and the factory was not far from Missenden.

Uncle Ern for many years was a bell ringer at Missenden Church, but in his old age had to give it up. They were both regular church goers. Auntie Kate had trouble with her eyes as she got older and couldn't see to do her sewing, etc. She took an active part in meetings (mothers meetings, etc.) at the church. After she died Uncle Ern lived for many years on his own with the help of neighbours, and Iris and Albert went there regularly, took dirty washing away, bringing it back clean on the next visit. I think that uncle Ern had been a bit of a rogue in his earlier days but he was a nice old man and I was very fond of him. Then he died he left what money he had to four nieces: Me, Iris, Girlie and his brother's daughter Vi.

BEATRICE ALICE CARTER was born in North Marston in 1885. She was nicknamed 'Jumbo' because at that time there was a pair of elephants in the news called Alice and Jumbo. I believe that one of them was to have been shipped off to America but before this happened died - pining away at being parted from the other. Or at least I think that is the story.

She was a lovely looking girl, blue-eyed and dark haired and was only 16 when her father died. She was then working at Chapmans who lived in Camden Villas, near the Westlyan chapel. The more I write about my Aunts, the more I think that they all started at Chapmans. My Grandparents always insisted that their daughters went to private homes and never into 'business'. One story that I have heard about Mrs Chapman is when she went storming down to the Brambles accusing, and I think it was Auntie San, of stealing the dripping from the Sunday joint. Apparently this was one of the perks claimed by the cook. My Grandmother pointed this out and said that San had taken it because she had been told that she was entitled to it. But Mrs. Chapman thought it was dreadful to take it because it was meant to feed her litter of puppies.

Mildren Ann (by now a widow with several small mouths to feed) said quietly 'It also feeds little children Mrs. Chapman'. Nothing more was said.

Mum and Alice were very close, there being only a year and nine months between them. Auntie Alice loved sewing and had hoped to be able to serve an apprenticeship, but that meant two years without pay. When her father died she knew that this was a dream which she would have to forgo, and went into Service instead.

Later she met Fred Hughes from Botolph Claydon and I understand was besotted with him. He was a good looking, attractive fellow and when I remember him had a shock of white hair. One Sunday afternoon she had been for a walk with him (Sunday afternoons seemed to be the time for courting - I suppose that they were all working the rest of the week) and went home without her best hat. Her mother wanted to know what had become of it and Alice said that she must have left it by such and such a stile. My Grandmother asked why on earth she had taken it off. 'Because I couldn't get close enough to Fred with it on'.

After marrying they went to live in a small terraced cottage in Botolph Claydon where their six children were born, four of them having FRED incorporated in their Christian names. I don't know when things started to go wrong but Uncle Fred began to 'take up' with another woman who may have lived in the village, Lou Beckett, or she may have been one of a family of Beckett's who lived near the woods. It must have been dreadful for Aunt Alice with all the village being aware of what was going on.

There was a six year gap between Wilf and the next child, Denis. Was this when the trouble started? Auntie Alice always seemed to feel differently about Denis - perhaps when he was born she felt that things were getting back to normal. Was it when things were bad that they moved to a larger house and Auntie Alice started the village shop. Perhaps she thought that at some time she would have to earn a living to support the younger children. I know that her ambition was to save enough money to leave all her children £100. I wonder if she achieved this. I know that at one time Uncle Fred left her but that was long after Girlie and Roy were born.

When we stayed at the Brambles in our summer holidays one of the things we always did was walk to Claydon to see Auntie Alice, and one year Auntie Glad was loth to go because she had heard about Uncle Fred, but Mum insisted on seeing her sister as usual. We went but Uncle Fred was nowhere to be seen.

Once when Uncle Sid was working at Granborough Road Station a girl came to buy a ticket and he first of all thought that it was Girlie, soon realised that it wasn't but knew exactly who it was the likeness was so great between Girlie and this girl (one of Lou Beckett's daughters). So the rumours heard in Marston were confirmed.

Once when we visited Claydon I wanted to stay and was left with Auntie

Alice for a few days. I had a wonderful time with Girlie, Denis and their friends. We all went to a farm on most days, staying nearly all day, playing with the animals, etc. There was an old man there who took an interest in us, enjoying our company, sharing his food and telling us many tales. I had only got one frock with me, so Auntie Alice found a yellow silk dress, more or less my size, and tied round the middle it didn't look too bad. After a few days Uncle Sid came on his bike to fetch me, but I didn't want to go and can remember running away round the garden. This was in the little terraced house where they first lived. Of course Uncle Sid went back to Marston without me said how cross he was and said 'the little bitch wouldn't come'. In a day or two he came again and this time I had to go, riding on the pillion seat behind.

Once many years later on a visit to Marston I was waiting for a bus in Kingsbury Square, Aylesbury, and there was a woman there who looked familiar but I wasn't sure if it was Auntie Alice, She kept looking at me but we were both too timid to speak. I wonder if it was her - I wish I had spoken.

Auntie Alice, I have always understood, was a very capable person. Even when she was young and newly married, neighbours would ask her for advice and help.

She died very suddenly during the Second World War. She had arranged to meet Auntie Kate at Baker Street Station and they were going shopping in London. She set off on her bike for Calvert Station but never reached there, and Auntie Kate waiting in London was worried to death. Auntie Alice was found by the roadside with her bike - she had died from a brain tumour.

Not long after Auntie Alice's death Uncle Fred married Lou Beckett and left the old home and Roy carried on with the shop. I wonder how Ray, Freda, Wilf etc. felt. I don't think that they had any contact with their half-sisters. When Uncle Fred died Mum, Auntie Glad, Iris and I went to East Calydon (can't remember how we got there). Iris and I stayed outside, but Mum and Auntie Glad went into the church. Lou Beckett and her daughters were there, of course, but they kept away from Auntie Alice's family.

Auntie Alice had six children:

RAYMOND FREDERICK was born in Botolph Claydon in 1910. He was very like his father in appearance. I know very little about him except that he married Ivy King, a school teacher, and they lived in Twyford. He was in the army in the war. They had two children: Brenda and Peter. Peter was only a boy when he was knocked down and killed in a road accident. (See cutting on golden wedding).

WALFREDA PHYLLIS was born in Claydon in 1911. Auntie Alice wrote to Mum and said that the baby's initials were 'A.P.', guess what it stands for. Mum wrote back and said that all she could think of was Apple Pudding.

She was a very dark haired pretty little girl. Neither do I know much about her - I suppose that she was that much older and we only saw her about once a year. She married Ernie Kimble and they set up home in Botolph Claydon where she still lives. Ernie must have been fairly young when he died because Freda has been a widow for many years.

WILFRED LLOYD was born in Claydon in 1913, was sandy haired and in his youth looked very much like Uncle Lew, although not as tall. He was in the army in the war. He married Peggy Birch from Granborough, Auntie May's niece (Uncle Ern's wife). They lived for a time in Granborough but have been back in Botolph Claydon now for many years,

DENIS WALTER HUGHES was born in 1919 and was the brainy one of the family. He won a scholarship to the Royal Latin School in Buckingham. Somehow he always seemed to be one on his own - different from the rest of the family. After leaving school he took up a teaching career but was soon conscripted. He served in the Royal Air Force, rose to Sergeant Air Gunner and Wireless Operator. He was killed in 1941 at the age of 21 in a flying accident.

WINIFRED (always known as GIRLIE) was born in 1922. She was dark haired like her sister and I suppose was the one I knew best in her childhood. As I have said before, she was directed by the Government into war work, stationed near Great Missenden, and lived with Auntie Kate for some time. She married and I believe has children.

ROY HUGHES was born in Botolph Claydon. After his mother's death and his father's second marriage, he stayed on in the old house and kept the village shop for some years. He married and has four children. He died in 1990.

MILDRED AUGUSTA CAHTER (GUSSIE), my Mother, was born at the Brambles on the 27th December 1886. She was blue eyed and fairer haired than her sisters. She attended the village school until she was fourteen years old. She loved school, except for geography lessons - had little idea where any place was in either this country or abroad. I suspect that when there was a geography lesson she was listening to the other classes in the room, especially the poetry lessons. She knew the poems taught to all the classes. She could recite for hours on end and was still doing so when in hospital and in her nineties. She was a great reader and kept the younger children and her friends enthralled by the stories she told - stories from the books she had read. While at school she was very thin and became anaemic because she ate so little with any nourishment seeming to have lived on toast which was all she wanted.

In her later life she read books by such authors as Thackeray, Charles Dickens, Thomas Hardy, the Bronte sisters, Jane Austin, etc. She was an intelligent person and would have benefitted greatly from a better education.

Mum was fourteen when her father died and was the one always to stay at home to help with the four younger children, with the housework and the

coal business. The only time she had away from home was when she sometimes replaced an older sister in her service job when on holiday or unwell. She had a hard early life but I think a happy one. She not only worked at home but helped her Grannie Henley and later on her Uncle Alf.

In those days they had to make their own amusements (no radio or television) and the Brambles must always have been full of people - cousins, friends, family, etc. Relatives also came to stay - there were only two bedrooms, although of a good size which would take two or maybe three beds. So there was a variety of interests.

There were several events to look forward to and enjoy. For instance, the Methodist Sunday Anniversary (which always came at Eastertime), the Summer Sunday Camp Meetings, Christmas, Easter, Whitsun, hay making time, harvest time, the Feast which started I think on the second Friday in September. This was really a fair, but was always called the 'Feast', and was in some way, I have read, to do with a religious festival, the real reason for which has been lost in antiquity. The same sort of thing went on all over the country in days gone by. It always arrived on the same day in certain places. I think that they were a mixture of gypsies and 'travellers' as they are called today. I understand that there was always a family there with the name of 'Carter' and they were related to us in some way. They travelled in real gypsy caravans and settled on the village green and in nearby fields. There were swings and roundabouts, Spinning Jennies, hoop-la, coconut shy, etc., stalls with food, rock, water pistols and things to amuse children. I have seen them making rock, pulling it on a caravan door handle to spread the coloured stripes, and spitting on their hands when they became sticky and pulling again. Ugh, but we ate it all the same. The Feast usually stayed for a week.

When it was harvest time, the threshing machines and threshers settled in the cuckoo-pen. This was a great time for the youngsters, and the word soon went round the village that the threshing machines were at Carters. These men travelled round from village to village with their machines - the same men year after year being greeted like old friends. People came from all over the village with their corn to be threshed.

On the opposite side of the road stands the 'Threshing Barn'. This was a communal barn belonging to the village. Whether it ever held a threshing machine I don't know. I can only remember a winnowing machine there. The barn was left open for anyone's use and children also used it to play there. More than one lost fingers playing with the machine, including our Cyril. It had a lovely old barny, beany, musty, chandlery smell.

Mum's closest friends were Kate Cox, Moss Garner and Louie Buckingham. In her teens Schorne College was still in existence and I think that all the village girls had a lot of fun with the college boys who were apparently always strolling round the village in their free time.

Mum also loved Sunday school and attended the Primitive Methodist school, which was run by Mark Price, until she was at least seventeen

years of age. She loved old Mark. I can remember him, I suppose that it was one Easter, standing at the top of the yard holding out a small bunch of violets which he had picked and thought might please me. When they were reading from the Bible at the Sunday school and came to a word they didn't know how to pronounce, he always said 'say pothooks' (think that was the word), so some of it couldn't have made much sense. Mum could quote extensively from the Bible. The family were all regular chapel goers and strict observers of the Sabbath. They did as little as possible on Sundays. Everything was got ready on the Saturday and what didn't get done then had to wait until Monday. For instance, if a shoe or boot button was lost or loose, it remained that way and you hobbled down to chapel as best you could. Auntie Kate was in trouble once because she washed a pair of white gloves which she especially wanted to wear and when it was discovered, to excuse herself, said that she had only used cold water, as though that put things right. Only walking and reading (and maybe only the Bible) were allowed

At the age of sixteen she was awarded a Bible after committing to memory the 1st, 15th, 25th, 37th, 101st 113th and 145th Psalms and reciting them before the .bishop. This was a bequest conveyed in the Will of Phillip, Lord Wharton, who died on the 4th February 1696. I still have the Bible. I wonder what happened to this bequest - is it still carried on?

Mum and Daddy started courting as far back as 1910. I don't know when it started. They would have met when Daddy and his parents and/or his sisters stayed with their Aunt Millie, and I believe that Mum went to Poplar to help when Auntie Het was expecting Leslie. And Mum and her Mother sometimes went to stay in Poplar with Gramma and Granpa. I know that Mum kept putting off the wedding because she was worried about her Mother who wasn't always well and felt that she shouldn't be left. However, after some years they were married in Marston church on her twenty-seventh birthday on the 27th December 1913. But by April 1914 her Mother was dead. How dreadful Mum must have felt.

I will continue with this story with their life together in Malmesbury Road, Bow.

NALDER CHARLES MARK CARTER was born at the Brambles in 1888, a boy at last. At that time a baby boy was born where one of his Mother's sisters was working and he was christened 'Nalder'. She thought that it would be nice if her new nephew was also called Nalder. He was. I feel that it was originally a surname. Uncle Nald was only twelve years old when his father died. I imagine that he stayed on at school until he was fourteen, but helped in his spare time with the coal business, although I know that Young; Alf helped a lot when he could.

I suppose that at twelve Uncle Nald became the man of the house - had to grow up quickly. He would drive the horse and cart, sometimes with one of the younger children, sometimes with Mum, to Winslow Road Station, load up, unload at home and deliver round the other villages and Marston, with only Mum, his mother and Young Alf to help. It was a hard

life for so young a boy.

In 1911/12 he married Florence Seaton of North Marston and they lived in one of the houses set back from the road in Quainton Road before you reach the Brambles. There were four terraced houses, all with their own long yards in front and not a lot of ground at the back. You had to go under an arch to get to Uncle Nald's door. These houses, which it was thought had been a farm many years ago, were demolished some time ago. I think that he still carried on with the coal until he was called up in the First World War.

He served in France but was taken prisoner by the Germans. I think that he was a prisoner of war for a couple of years, was not treated very well, and by the time he was released at the end of War was a hospital case. He was in a hospital in Oxford for some time and ever afterwards suffered with his back. He never did a proper job after that but earned a living by keeping a few chickens, selling their eggs and a bit of gardening. He bought or rented a piece of ground at the end of Quainton Road/beginning of Stone Hill and kept the chickens there. He was ill on and off for many years before he died at the age of 72 in 1960.

Auntie Floss lived alone and in her later years became a little mentally unstable. When Uncle Nald was alive she must have caused him a lot of embarrassment.

They had seven children:

HAROLD CARTER was born in Marston in 1912. When he was a boy he spent a lot of time at the Brambles, especially when Mum returned to Marston with me a baby, whom he made a fuss of. He had two babies at home but didn't seem to be interested in them. I am told that my first word was 'Awold'.

He was a very good looking young man and from his early teens started 'walking out' with Nancy White, the Blacksmith's daughter. He had odd ideas about how a girl should look and dress - no high heels, no make-up, no curlers, etc., so Nancy always looked a bit severe. She was auburn haired. They married after some years and lived with Nancy's parents (Syb and Henry White) in the house next to the Bell. He worked for some years for his Uncle Tom Seaton, who in those days ran the bakehouse (bake-us) and travelled round with horse and cart delivering bread, and I suppose giving a hand with the making, and baking. If I remember rightly he was not considered fit to join the Army.

After the bakehouse he took on the milk round and delivered for miles around by horse and cart and later by a motorised van. It was a hard job. I have seen him and Nancy washing hundreds of bottles after his rounds, before they could be returned to the suppliers for re-use.

He died suddenly from a heart attack before his time, many years ago. They had one son Simon who married and still lives in Marston with his

family in a council house in Schone Lane. Nancy lives alone in her old house.

ROLAND CHARLES CARTER (DICK) was born in Marston in June 1914. I am not sure why he was called Dick but think that it was something to do with Dick the horse owned by his Grandmother. He was partly crippled and had no use in his left hand. I have heard that he was dropped when a baby but do not know if there is any truth in this. Auntie Kate had him for some time in Croydon trying to get help for him in the London hospitals, but they were not able to help. Years later he went for treatment and had an operation on his hand. He still could not pick up anything but could grasp anything put into it.

He spent a lot of time at the Brambles, particularly when we were on holiday there and came for long walks with us, i.e. to the Quainton Hills, across to Quainton Village, the woods etc. He had many meals at the Brambles which Auntie Glad could ill afford to give and sometimes grumbled about it. He helped sometimes in the garden and in the evenings we mostly all played cards. I was very fond of Dick and missed him when he moved away from Marston.

For some years after his brother Harold finished with the Bakehouse, Dick and Cyril, another brother, took over and worked for their Uncle Tom. Apart from that he didn't have a regular job, just odd jobs around Marston, and helped his father with the chickens. It was thought that he was not capable of doing a real job, but the Second World War proved this to be wrong. Men were being called up and there were more jobs going in Aylesbury. Dick was taken on at Hazell, Watney and Viney, the Aylesbury printers, and he kept the job until his retirement.

At Hazells he met Doreen Beales whom he married. Iris and I were the only ones outside his immediate family who were invited to the wedding and the reception held at the Bull's Head Hotel in Aylesbury Market Square. They made their home in Aylesbury and had two sons, Frank and Stephen. Dick hadn't been completely well for some time, but it wasn't thought to be serious, but then he died quite suddenly in December 1989 at the age of 75.

WALTER ERNEST CARTER (WAL or PODDY) was born in Marston in February 1916. He was a good looking fellow, darker haired than his brothers and more like the Seaton side of the family. We spent a good deal of time with him when we were children in Marston. He and Dick were not always the best of friends, but I don't know what was wrong. He took up farming and wasn't called up during the War. He married Dolly Hopkins and they set up home in Dunton where he continued farming. They had one daughter, Jane, who is married with children. Poddy died in 1990 at the age of 74.

CYRIL JAMES CARTER (SOODY) was born in 1919 in Marston, after his father's return from the prisoner-of-war camp. In our childhood we also spent time with him when we stayed at the Brambles. When a young boy he lost the tops of a couple of fingers when playing with the Winnowing Machine in the Threshing Barn in Quainton Road.

The only job I can remember him having before the War was delivering bread for miles around for his Uncle Tom Seaton. He served in the Army during the War. In his early teens he started 'walking out' with Peggy Pipkin of another Marston family. They married but whether before or after the War I cannot remember. They first of all lived in Morton's House at the other end of the village and then moved to a council house in Granborough Road.

He drove an ambulance for the Royal Bucks Hospital in Aylesbury for many years. Then he started to have a bit of heart trouble and they moved to a bungalow in Winslow. Later he was forced to retire after a heart attack. He died suddenly, only a few months after his brother Dick, in 1990 at the age of 71.

Cyril and Peggy had one daughter, Lesley Dawn, who lives in Winslow. She lost her husband at a very young age some years ago. She has two children.

GILBERT CARTER was born in Marston in 1921. He was taller than his brothers Dick and Cyril, and had auburn hair. He also spent time at the Brambles with us and later on he, Iris and I used to go out a lot together, cycling for miles. What work he did, if any, before his call-up I don't know.

After he was conscripted he was sent to Italy where he and Nald met in a convalescent centre. Nald was recovering from a shrapnel wounded leg and Gil had been suffering from jaundice.

After the war he married Margaret? and lived in Flaunden. They adopted two children, a boy and a girl. Margaret died many years ago and Gil lived on his own for some time but then went to live sometimes with the boy and sometimes with the daughter. This must be a horrible existence. He died after a long illness in 1990, not long after his brother Cyril, at the age of 67.

FLORENCE JEAN CARTER was born in Marston in 1924, the daughter Uncle Nald had waiting for for so long. She was the apple of his eye. She was only fifteen when war broke out. I don't know if she worked or not.

I remember walking from Aylesbury to Marston with her and a boyfriend one evening during the war. Mum and I had been trying to get away from the London raids but the railway was running a shuttle service from London to Amersham to get as many people out as possible. We were all turned out at Amersham and the station platform was crammed with people. If the station had been bombed it would have been dreadful. We had to wait a long long time for a train going through to Aylesbury, arrived very late, and consequently lost the last bus. Jean and her boyfriend were also stranded. He was in Air-Force uniform - from Halton Camp I imagine. Was he the one she married?

We 'phoned Malcolm Holden in Marston who had a car hire business but he didn't get the message until hours later, We started walking hoping to

meet Malcolm. The boyfriend had a bike and balanced our luggage on it some of the time. We walked all the way to Marston- it had grown dark but with a lovely harvest moon. Of course, when we got to the Brambles it was in darkness so we had to go round to the back and throw something at the bedroom window. In the morning Malcolm came to see if we were all right and apologise. He thought that if we complained he might lose his licence.

Jean married a Belgian and made her home there. She comes home fairly often, mostly staying with her brother Wal in Dunton. The last time I saw her was at her father's funeral. I wonder if she will come to England now that Wal is dead. She now has only the one brother left, Will in Aylesbury, and I don't know if they were very close.

WILFHED THOMAS CARTER was born in Worth Marston in 1927. He was twelve years old and still at school when the War started. What he did for a living after school I haven't a clue. He was sandy/auburn haired.

I have one vivid memory of him when he was a very small boy - could not really speak properly. Nald, Iris and I were playing out in the road outside the Brambles with Ted Stevens who lived in one of the pair of cottages close to the Brambles. He was always playing tricks and was a dreadful tease. Wilf came out of his yard to come and join us and got as far as Joe Warr's. Ted saw him coming and hid. Wilf called out 'Ah me tan see you Ted Stebens. You tink me tan't but me tan'. He was a cunning little boy (cunning in the Marston sense of the word).

Wilf married and lives in Aylesbury and has a family of four or five.

This brings me to another story about Ted Stevens. He often came down to the Brambles and on the Saturday morning when he was getting married came down early. Iris and I were still in bed and he called up are you respectable? We were, and up he came to talk about his wedding. In no time he was romping around and, fully clothed in bed between the two of us. I often wondered what his bride would have thought if she had known where he had spent part of his morning.

CLARA. GLADYS CARTER (CLAD or GLAD) was born at the Brambles on the 10th March 1890. She was only ten years old when her father died. I imagine that she went to school until she was fourteen because by then it would have been compulsory, no doubt she would have helped at home and with the coal as she grew up. In her childhood she was a skinny little thing but improved as she grew. She was a very good looking girl, darker haired than Mum, and was thought to be one of three best lookers in the family - the other two being Kate and Alice - although all the family were good looking.

I believe that her first job was at Chapmans in Marston, and when she was old enough went into Service, Burnabys at Great Missenden comes to mind, and she then moved on to the old Tudor Manor House, Chenies. I think that this is where she met Uncle Sid who worked in the gardens of the adjoining house. There was a garden gate connecting the two

properties and that is where they met in their off duty times. In one of her Service places she had a poisoned finger and had hospital treatment. She couldn't work so went home and this was perhaps one of the occasions when Mum filled in. Fortunately she didn't lose the finger but it was very misshapen afterwards. She also had an odd little finger (called by some the Carters finger). Others in the family had a crooked little finger but not as pronounced as Auntie Glad' s - it was bent almost at right angles.

When her mother died in 1914 I think it was then that she went back to the Brambles - uncle Lew and uncle Ern were then the only ones left at home. She and Uncle Sid were living there when Mum went back with me as a baby of about three weeks in 1916.

Uncle Sid was brought up in Chorley Wood and was known as Sidney Rolfe. He lived with his Grannie Rogers. At some time when he needed his birth certificate (I always thought that it was when he was getting married, but now I know that I am wrong) he discovered that his name was Rogers and he then became known as Sidney Rolfe Rogers, But who was he? Was Grannie Rogers really his grannie, or could she have been his mother? If not, who was his mother? And who were his two sisters, Audrey and Daisy? Was their name Rolfe or Rogers? And now I have no one to ask.

He was called up in the First World War and served in the Rifle Brigade, but was soon invalided out suffering from rheumatism in late 1915 or early 1916. It was then (in early 1916) that he and Auntie Glad married in Marston church.

After he settled at the Brambles he got a job on the railway as a Signaller. He worked in many places, e.g. Granborough Road Station, Winslow Road, Verney Junction, Great Missenden, Aylesbury. At the smaller stations he was not only the signaller, but the porter, the cleaner, served in the ticket office and any other jobs that needed doing. He worked different shifts, sometimes getting home very, very late or in the early hours, and sometimes starting off before it was light in early morning. On all these journeys he cycled which must have put hours on his day, especially when at Great Missenden. In one bad winter, when the snow was feet deep, he plodded all the way, mostly pushing his bike, to Verney Junction (about 5-6 miles) to get to the signal box on time. There was a piece about him in a local paper headed 'Hero of the Snow' but it has unfortunately been lost. At the time of his retirement he was stationed in Aylesbury.

Auntie Glad was a very good hearted woman - always ready to help someone, doing their washing etc. And there were always callers coming in to chat. Besides people in the villas there was the coalman looking for a cup of tea or a glass of homemade wine, the butcher from Whitchurch and Mr. Young from Oving the greengrocer. When I first remember the Brambles it had been made into two cottages. The smaller derelict part had been built up and a Mrs. Tilbury and her brother 'Old Mick' Gregory lived there. Mrs. Tilbury was too old to look after them properly and Auntie Glad did their washing for them, all of course by

hand. The bedclothes in particular were full of fleas but Auntie Glad coped where many another would have refused. Old Mick was very often drunk, sometimes lying down in the road, and Auntie Glad was the one who could cope with him.

She also did a few hours work in Holdens in the next house to earn a bit of money, and before that worked at Alderman's farm each morning, which was about a mile away. When we were staying at the Brambles, Iris, Nald and I used to walk there to meet her, sometimes blackberrying on the way.

During the War she coped with Jewish refugees. The first one was a Mrs. Burmann from Poland and her small baby. Apparently a load of foreign women and children had been allocated to Marston for accommodation and they were put into the village hall to wait. About the only one left sitting there was this young woman and baby. Nobody offered to take her and in desperation they went to the Brambles asking Auntie Glad if she could possibly take her. She didn't like to say no, with four bedrooms and only three people living there. So she went up to the village hall and there sat the woman, looking half dead with tiredness, with a baby strapped to a pillow. Auntie Glad said that she couldn't leave her and just went up to her and held out her arms for the baby and said come with me. I believe that Mrs. Burmann only spoke a few words of English so it must have been hard going. They occupied the bedrooms in the new part. I believe that they all grew very fond of the baby. They didn't stay so very long because I think that they got a passage to America.

When they left Auntie Glad gave a home to another woman and child who had been staying with Mr. and Mrs. White (he was the blacksmith) and they didn't get on too well. The woman was an Austrian Jew (Mrs. Orbach) and her small daughter Eve (we called her Evi). She was of about school age and attended the village school. At first Mrs. Orbach (Camilla) was frantic because Arnold (Arnie) her husband had been interned. This was a wartime practice to intern all foreign men but not the women. In her mind they had escaped from concentration camps in Europe only to be detained in one here. Auntie Glad had a hard job convincing her that here in England he would be all right. And, of course, he was, and she and Evi were allowed to visit him from time to time and write. They stayed at the Brambles for years, until the war was over and Arnie was released. I wonder what happened about their Jewish customs and religion. Auntie Glad wouldn't have had an idea about that. She thought that Auntie Glad was a marvel with food. Most things were rationed and yet out of a small piece of meat a good dinner for all was produced. They occupied the smaller of the two bedrooms in the old part, Auntie Glad realising that if she put them in the new part they would be virtually occupying both bedrooms (one leading from the other) preventing any of her own family from staying.

We met Mrs. Orbach and Evi many times. After Arnie's release they first went up to Manchester, and later settled in High Wycombe in Bucks. The families kept in touch for the rest of their lives. Auntie Glad' was the first to die and the Orbachs came to her funeral, and Evi visited Iris

with her family after that.

Until the 1950s the Brambles was rented at two shillings and six pence a week, but then the owner, Mrs. Dudley, died stating in her will that the property she owned should be sold at a reasonable price to the tenants. The price for the Brambles was £200. Auntie Glad scraped the money together and bought it. Mum, Iris, Auntie Glad and I went up to the Bell where the auction was being held for the property not being bought by the existing tenants. One cottage went for as little as £60, making her wonder if she had over paid.

She was a good old gal and my favourite Aunt. We were always welcome to go there at any time and she always did her best for you. In her later years she was not always well but carried on until her last illness. She

She died in iris's home at the age of 77 in 1967.

Uncle Sid (and I think that he was my favourite Uncle) lived for many years on his own at the Brambles. Early each weekday morning he would go over to Granborough Road to collect Rusty, Iris's dog, to look after him while iris and Albert were at work, and then take him back again when he went for his evening meal. Rusty became as much Uncle Sid's dog as Iris's. Iris did her Dad's washing, shopping and tried to keep the old house clean and tidy. He used to look forward to Mum and me going to stay with him, which we did for two or three weeks every year, getting his meals etc. He felt that that was more like home.

When he was taken ill iris took him to stay with her until he was taken into hospital where he died. I think that he had cancer of the liver, he died in 1977 at the age of 86.

Auntie Glad and Uncle Sid had one daughter, Iris.

North Marston Church Magazine - August 1977

In Memoriam, Clara Gladys Rogers (Auntie Glad)

Mrs. Rogers passed away on June 30th, after a long illness, following some years of indifferent health.

She was a woman of great beauty of character and beloved by all who knew her; she will be sorely missed by her many relations and friends in North Marston and beyond.

We would express our deepest sympathy with her Husband, Daughter, and Son-in-law. May she rest in peace.

J.E.C.

North Marston Church Magazine May 1977

SIDNEY ROLFE ROGERS To the many friends of Mr. Sidney Rogers it was a

sad surprise to hear of his death following a short illness. This occurred at the home of his daughter and son-in-law, Mr. & Mrs. Palmer on the 22nd of April at the age of 86.

London born and brought up in the Chorley Wood district, Mr. Rogers began his working life as a gardener, then in World War 1 as a soldier. Following his discharge he married Miss Gladys Carter, one of a well-known North Marston family and lived at the Brambles in Quainton Road, North Marston until his last illness. The late Mrs. Rogers died some ten years ago.

Working as a signaller ticket collector and various other positions of employment with the L.N.E.R. for some forty years he cycled at all hours of the day and night to the station at Great Missenden, Verney Junction, Winslow Road and Granborough Road. In the cricket team he was famous as a batsman and perhaps more latterly as a dart player.

We shall miss the pleasant meetings and greetings that we have for so long exchanged yet we shall value the memory of one for whom we have had the deepest respect.

Our sympathy to Mr & Mrs Palmer at this time

IRIS JOAN ROGERS (ODDY) was born on the 3rd May 1921 at the Brambles. She was blue-eyed and so very fair, almost white, but got darker as she grew older. I can remember her being born, and being a little .jealous as Auntie Glad had always made so much of us, especially when we lived at the .Brambles during the First World War. She was my closest dearest cousin. In those days it was the custom to lay the baby down in front of the fire where it was warmest and I remember laying down there with her and sleeping too.

They came to stay only the once, I believe, in Bow and that was the year of the Wembley .Exhibition (1925), so Iris could only have been four years old. Nald and I went to school and Mum to work her morning shift, so Auntie, Uncle and Iris were left in the house. She noticed that a tap was dripping and put a bowl underneath to catch the drops. When Mum came home she proudly took her to see how much water she had saved for her. She was used to being careful with every drop.

She did very well at school. In the village lived another Mr. and Mrs. Rogers (he had once been a schoolmaster at Marston school). At that time they had lived in the cottage occupied by Alf Cheshire which was the Post Office. They now lived in the 'big' house, and would have adopted Iris if uncle Sid and Auntie Glad had agreed, instead they did their best to give her further education so that she would be able to get a better job. She went to them every weekday morning for two years, having tuition in shorthand, typing, improved English, Arithmetic, etc.

So far as I know her first job was at Hammonds, a hat factory from Luton, and worked in the office there. She used to get some nice velour hats for us there, just 'hoods' and we had to get them modelled. She

became very friendly with a man there, Alec Fischer, who came to Marston many times, bringing her home in the car and me too when we were shopping in Aylesbury. In the middle of the war he and others at Hammonds were interned because the authorities had become suspicious of them (they were Germans). When the premises were searched in the basement were found radio transmitting sets with which they had been passing on any information. They were nothing but fifth columnists. The Hat factory closed down.

Before this, when I was working for Sir Lindsay Parkinson in Shaftesbury Avenue, a building firm who had government contracts, I was leaving the building one Saturday midday, and someone said 'Hullo Mildret', and there was Alec Fischer waiting for me. He must have gone to a lot of trouble to find where I worked because I am sure Shaftesbury Avenue was never mentioned. He wanted me to spend the afternoon with him but I couldn't or wouldn't - I felt a bit awkward because it was Iris he was interested in. I didn't realise what it was all about until I heard he had been interned. I only hope that I didn't give him any information, but can't believe that I knew anything of importance.

After Hammonds, Iris went to work at the Ideal Insurance offices. She worked there for many years serving at the counter and coping with the wages. After the Ideal closed I cannot remember whether she worked anywhere else, but her last job was in a garage (in the office) where she once again coped with the wages, income tax, pay or save as you earn, and all the complicated things required by the Government. After she 'retired' she still went in one day a week to do the wages.

She was always very fond of animals and at first had rabbits and guinea pigs, and then her first dog 'Binkie'. At that time there was a popular small girl who danced and sang in films called Binkie Stuart. He was a bit of a terrier, mostly white with a black face, and was a dear. He came out for walks and went ten times as far as the rest, continually running ahead, coming back, and running ahead and so on. Sometimes we went on bikes and he would run for miles behind. In those days there was only an occasional horse and cart on the road so there was no danger.

Her second dog was 'Randy'. At that time Randolph Turpin, a heavyweight boxer was much in the news. He was an odd looking dog, black curly coat, spaniel type ears, a big solid body and short legs. But he could walk too and I took him for miles. Once to Iris's amazement (and worry because we had been gone for so long) he walked with me on the circular route from Marston, Carter's Lane, Pitchcott, Oving and back to Marston, about seven miles. And he was getting on then.

The third and last dog was 'Rusty', called so because he had rusty patches in his long black silky coat and on his nose and paws. He was the best of them all, very intelligent and also walked and ran for miles. He would get you to play with him, you pretending you weren't looking and tried to grab the ball which he was guarding. Sometime during the game (when you never knew) it all changed and you found that he was playing with you, pretending not to look when you tried to get

the ball. While Rusty was still alive Iris took a lot of notice of a large lolloping Labrador who belonged to a neighbour and he became her dog rather than theirs. He was called 'Lucky'. I always felt that Rusty was pushed into a back seat then. I didn't like Lucky at first -he was too big and boisterous. But when he calmed down with age I changed my mind. Alison and Kathy loved him.

In her late teens Iris met Albert Palmer and started going out with him. There was another Albert, known as Shrimp, and he and Albert and I went about together when I was down there, sometimes walking and sometimes on bikes. Albert worked in Pages, the Aylesbury bakers. He seems to have lived sometimes in Winslow and others in Aylesbury. He and iris married in 1942 and lived for a time at the Brambles. Albert was then in the Army. After he was demobbed he went back to Pages. He was working there in 1947 when I was married because, in spite of almost everything being rationed, he was able to get me a very nice wedding cake. Long after he left Pages, which was mainly because of his health (working in hot closed in atmosphere for hours) he baked and iced cakes for special occasions and was very good at it. He then went to Westcott to work as an electrician or electrician's mate with a neighbour, Doug Bevan. Westcott was a few miles from Marston and was an Air Ministry establishment. When work began to get short there he transferred to the Post Office and travelled round in a van as a telephone engineer. He kept this job until retirement.

After the war council houses had been built in the field known as Gibbins Close off Granborough Road, and Iris and Albert were allocated one.

Round about that time the local brewers decided to close two Marston pubs, the Wheatsheaf and the Sportsman, leaving only the Bell open. Marston didn't like being told which pub they should patronise and said that they would rather walk to Winslow. I believe that some of them did until the weather was bad. By this time it had been discovered that if twenty five people formed a club a licence could be granted. Twenty five members signed and a licence was obtained and a room hired in the village hall. Iris, Albert and Uncle Sid were amongst the first to serve behind the bar in the evenings and Sunday mornings. Iris was the treasurer and main support for over forty years, and the club is still going strong.

Iris always seemed to be such a healthy person, but in her last years had breathing troubles. After having X-rays and tests she went into the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford for an operation and there she died, after just one day, on the 11th January 1991. She was only 69 years of age. Maid, Eda and I went to the funeral and I have never seen the church so full. Who they all were I do not know.

A short while after her father died, Iris sold the Brambles and spent the money buying and improving the council house. Albert is staying on there.

North Marston and Granborough Magazine January 1991

MRS I J PAIMER

It is with deep sorrow I record the death of my friend and companion Iris. After a short illness she passed away peacefully at the John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford, on the 11th January.

Iris was born and brought up in North Marston. The only child of the late Mr and Mrs S Rogers of Quainton Road, she devoted her life to them and to her husband, Albert. With great affection I shall always treasure the love she bestowed on my three sons. Indeed she loved all children and was affectionately called 'Auntie Iris' by them all.

Iris was a founder member of the North Marston Social Club and acted a treasurer for over forty years. She contributed and helped with all the activities in the village and will be greatly missed.

May I, on behalf of Albert, express his sincere thanks to Sylvia Allen, Nora Smith and Jenny and John Wilkins for the comfort and support they have given him at this sad time.

Nancy Bevan

WALTER LEWIS CARTER was born at the Brambles on the 1st July 1893. He was a typical Tattam- blue eyed, sand/auburn hair (with a bit of a kink) and tall. His final height was 6ft 2 1/2 ins. He was nicknamed 'Post*' (pronounced Poo-ast). His mother sometimes called him 'Voo-ey' which at times made him cross. I have been told that he was to take a sack of something up the road but lingered. His mother called 'Now come on 'Voo-ey'. 'Ah Voo-ey' he said, 'I'll put it down and won't go at all', but he did.

He attended the village school until he was fourteen years of age and was another one who would have benefitted from a better education. He was only seven years old when his father died, and as he grew would have helped with the coal. After school he was a farm labourer and helped in the garden and on the allotment where they had a piece of ground on the Poor's Piece. He and his brother, Ern, when only boys went to work there with 'Me Gramp'. As boys will they started to mess around and fight until they were told by Gramp to get on and work. Uncle Lew always remembered this.

His mother died in 1914 and then soon after war broke out. He began to think about leaving farm labouring and joining the Life Guards - he had the height for it. He knew that he would eventually be called up and this was the regiment he wanted, and was told that unless he volunteered he could be drafted to any regiment. So he signed on for seven years, I believe in 1915. He had his own horse which he had to groom, but this was nothing new to him. Almost to the end of his life he used a cut-throat razor and sharpened it on a leather strop hooked onto the wall. As soon as he began stropping he started making a shushing noise,

blowing out through his teeth - from habit blowing away the dust and hairs when grooming a horse, a habit he never lost. He called his horse 'Floss'. His brother Nald's new wife was Floss, whether this was a compliment or not I don't know.

After his training he was sent to France and fought on the Somme. He had a dreadful time - a rather nervous boy from a quiet country village rocketed into all that. He was what they called a 'runner' and had to go through the trenches with messages, and the dreadful sights he saw and the dead bodies he trod on gave him nightmares for the rest of his life. He was finally sent home in 1918 a hospital case, suffering from pneumonia.

While still serving his time in the Guards after the war Uncle Lew took an education course and did well. He educated himself, was a great reader, loved music and poetry. He was stationed at Knightsbridge Barracks and on his days off often came to Bow. I thought he was marvellous - good looking, tall and in uniform. I remember copying everything he did. At the table, if he picked up a cup to drink, I did the same; if he used his knife and fork I used mine too, etc. When he had served his time Uncle Era Higgin got him a job in the offices of the Southern Railway in Croydon where he and Auntie Kate were living and gave a home to Uncle Lew. When Daddy died he came to live with us in Bow. I think that he must have found life very different after Auntie Kate's home, her cooking, etc. because Mum was out at work and couldn't give him the comforts he had been used to.

When I was about twelve years old (in about 1928) he started courting a Mrs. Kate Gasson and brought her home to meet us. She seemed nice but had a funny accent and odd expressions - she came from Pulborough in Sussex and was in Service in London. She called sloes 'winter pinks' said that something low down was low up, aforesun meant soon, and lots of other odd things I have forgotten. She had been married before to a Capt. Gasson in her teens but he had died. She came from a big family - I think that there were eleven children and she never stopped talking about them. In fact we soon knew her family as well as our own. We thought that they were rather a rum lot and that she was the pick of the bunch - little did we know. She talked with her hands a lot - pretty little hands.

She was working in an old Tudor cottage just off Piccadilly and one weekend when the owners were away she took me up there to stay. It was beautiful, all oldy worldy yet at the same time modern. During the Second World War I worked near there and passed the cottage every morning and then one morning it was a pile of rubble having been bombed during the night.

Uncle Lew was very particular about his appearance especially when he was meeting Kit. The last thing he did before going out was stand in front of our mirror over the fireplace, light a match and pass it around his face to inspect his shave.

They married in Bow Church in 1930. It was a very simple affair and they came back here for a meal, the grown-ups eating in our back room, while Nald and I had our friends round the table in the front. They went to live in an upstairs flat in West Croydon. It had sloping ceilings and I thought it was great. They soon moved to Mason's Road and later to Edward Road in Addiscombe where they were living when war broke out.

During the war they got very friendly with a Mr and Mrs Carter - meeting them in the air raid shelters. Mrs. Carter died soon after and help him and his two boys. I don't know how it all happened but she became very attached to Wally and he to her and must have persuaded her to leave Uncle Lew. She didn't say anything to him and when he went home after working at London Bridge Station found that she was gone and half the furniture, neighbours remembered seeing a removal van and told Uncle who they were. Uncle Lew went to Bow, and when I got home there he was sobbing. It was dreadful - I had never seen a man cry before. In the morning he asked Mum to go to Croydon with him and when I came downstairs he wanted me to go too, so I went. Walking across London Bridge was like going to a funeral. No-one spoke then or in the train. We went to the removal people in Croydon and after a lot of talk gave Uncle Lew the address to which they had taken the furniture. Wally Carter answered the door and said that Auntie Kit was out but we had seen her slip out of the back door. Uncle Lew forced his way in we followed.

After a bit she came back in and went with uncle Lew into the front room. Mum and I sat on the stairs - there was nowhere else. After a long time Uncle Lew came out and said that she was coming back and we all trooped up to the bedroom to get her clothes, Wally as well, it was dreadful, like some unsavoury scene out of Pegs Paper. The bed was unmade; there was Uncle Lew's furniture and ornaments we recognised as coming from Edward Road. Then off we went, not before we thought there was going to be a fight between Wally and Uncle Lew, until Mum said 'come on Lew.' We went to London Bridge where Uncle Lew went to his office and left us in a cafe. Auntie Kit behaved as if nothing had happened. Then we all went back to Bow. Uncle Lew went back to his office and then Auntie Kit burst into tears, sobbing her heart out.

They stayed with us for weeks and weeks. Food was rationed and each week Uncle had time off to go to Croydon with her where they were registered. I don't know what it was about Uncle Lew but he seems to take over and it wasn't our home any more, he had loud music on continually and we couldn't listen to any of our programmes or do what we had been used to doing. After many weeks they packed up and went home, but were caught in an air raid in Stepney and were taken to a house for shelter. Auntie Kit said that she was more frightened of the bugs than the bombs. They were trapped there all night.

After they were back home in Addiscombe, Uncle Lew had time off on one day every week so that they could go together to get their rations and food for the week. She wasn't allowed out on her own and was virtually a prisoner. Whether she went out when Uncle wasn't there of course we

couldn't know.

If Mum didn't hear from them every so often she got very worried. After one long break she found that Auntie Kit was in hospital - she had taken an overdose of something. Mum went to the hospital and then Uncle Lew took her back to Edward Road where there was a young man. Uncle Lew introduced him as Kit's son much to Mum's amazement. Apparently he had just turned up one day to see if they could help him get work and Auntie Kit said that he was her sister Win's son, but Uncle Lew guessed the truth. She had told us that she had had a baby but that it had died, Now she said that she had had twins and one died. She had kept this boy secret all her married life and before, but her family knew about him. He had lived with his father part of the time and later with his Grandmother (Auntie Kit's mother). She lived in Brighton and Auntie Kit visited her often and, of course, saw her son. She said that once Uncle Lew had said that he didn't want children, so she never told him.

After that they came to stay with us again and it was just the same as the first time. Eventually they advertised for an accommodation swop. During the war that was about the only way that it was possible to move. A family from Swell in Surrey answered their advert and the two families duly swopped.

After they went to Ewell, Wally Carter came back into their lives again. He travelled around to Uncle Lew's family trying to blacken her name. He went to Auntie Glad and Uncle Nald in Marston, Auntie Kate at Missenden, Mum in Bow, Auntie Maud in Tonbridge and me in Lewisham (I was married by this time). Then one evening detectives arrived in Bow asking Mum what she knew about a Walter Lewis Garter and Tryphena Kate Gasson, and it turned out that she had bigamously married Uncle Lew. She said that she had been told that Gasson was dead and she had accepted it. I believe that she knew all the time that he was alive because her family and the boy must have known and Wally knew that it wasn't a proper marriage. Auntie Kit was the sort of person who ignored rules and regulations and I suppose thought that it would never come out.

The Police found Gasson living with a coloured woman somewhere in Sussex. I thought that he died soon after but the marriage certificate says that there was a divorce. There were no criminal proceedings and they were remarried in Epsom Register Office and Les and I went as witnesses. Poor old Lew, what a life she had led him, and he was such a quiet old stick and would never have put a foot wrong. In spite of all this he thought the world of her and I suppose that that they lived happily ever after.

They spent many years in the upstairs flat on the Ewell By Pass. It was a much more rural place than Addiscombe and suited Uncle Lew's country upbringing. Auntie Kit became a poor old thing, heart trouble, crumbling backbone, ulcerated legs, but she was always very cheerful.

We didn't see so much of them after they moved to Ewell and Mum still worried. I remember that on Winter's day she decided to visit them to

see if everything was all right. Nald came too, so I suppose that the war was over. We visited seldom because we never knew if it was one of her good days or bad. So they came to Bow fairly often. I was very fond of Auntie Kit, Especially as she grew older.

When they could no longer cope with an upstairs flat they moved into sheltered accommodation. Soon after she had several falls and spells in hospital, the first one a couple of days after they moved into the sheltered flat, and was never really well after that. She died on Christmas Day 1981 at the age of 82. Uncle Lew stayed on in the flat and I visited him as often as I could, to change his bed, cook a meal, get his pension, pay his rent etc. And after he retired Nald came to. But Uncle Lew became so very unpleasant and rude, not grateful for anything. Then he had a fall and was taken into hospital. We visited him every week took his filthy washing home (poor old man), but began to hate going because he was so rude and especially when in front of the other patients

When he wasn't able to live alone any longer and so Wald and I had to clear the flat and sell his things. A Home was found for him in Banstead. Nald used to go and get his shopping each week but never a thank you, and I would try to clean things up a bit. It took us over two hours to get to him and he wouldn't let us rest for a minute. Treated us like two naughty children and there we were in our seventies. I had been very fond of him but his behaviour killed any affection.

While he was still in the sheltered flat he once told me that he didn't want to go into a home but I couldn't have him. He was too big for me to cope with and I knew that he would, take over as before and my life wouldn't be my own. That could have been one reason why he changed. Another thing, we had to empty his flat and get rid of most things, and all he got for it was £35. This must be heart breaking to lose the home you have worked all your life for and for it all to be worthless. I'm just making excuses for him I know because he changed long before there was any talk of a home.

He died in the Banstead Home in February 1986 at the age of 92.

ERNEST HENLY CARTER - Uncle Ern North Marston Church Magazine

I don't know why his bread and cheese always tasted so good, I don't know how he always kept his good humour, but I do know that for a long, long time he was my best friend.

World War I and a young soldier from North Marston in his early twenties fought for King and Country, taking part in the ' Egyptian war sphere. The troop ship on which he was on board in the Mediterranean sank. Ernest amongst others survivors spent the night in small open boats. Later in the war he travelled up through Italy to France and was demobilised in 1919

Shortly after returning home he married Miss May Newman of Granborough,

living in this village for the rest of his life. He worked however in North Marston for the late Mr. A. Gregory of the "Sportsman's Arms" driving horses on field and road for far more miles than he could ever count.

In 1928 he began working at Carters Lane Farm, there to remain until his retirement in 1960 but still working part time until 1970

As early as I can remember I would tag along with Ern. In the farming era of the Thirties, muscle men and horse powered the farm. The hay was cut in 'cakes' from a rick with a heavy knife, the cows were milked by hand and the pair of six gallon buckets carried on the shoulders, the manure was all moved by fork and the hedges laid with bill and cuffs. All these jobs, and many I did not mention, Ern did to perfection - working long hours yet together with his wife brining up a family of three sons, greatly to his credit

Ern's death at Stoke Mandeville Hospital on the 27th December at the age of 81, following a short illness leaves a feeling of sadness that is hard to overcome for his life was an example of the conscientious man of the country village, whose home and family is dear, whose work is his pride, whose allotment provides, whose pleasures are modest.

I cannot express in any words the gratitude that I feel to have known Ern Carter so well, to have worked with him for so long and to remember the years that we shared together.

Our deep sympathy to all Ernest's family at this sad time.

Ewart Dancer

P.S, Thank you to Granborough for the privilege of writing this obituary.

ERNEST HENLEY CARTER was born at the Brambles in 1895. He was a much slighter, shorter build than his brother Lewis. When his father died he was only five years old.

After school, apart from helping with the coal and allotment, he went as a farm labourer. He was still living at home when Mum went back there to live in the First World War. He was later called up and joined the Bucks Yeomanry, being stationed in Buckingham's Old Jail for some time. He was posted to Egypt but the troop ship in which he was travelling was torpedoed in the Mediterranean but he survived. While in Egypt his horse was shot from under him and again he survived. He was demobbed in 1919 and returned home to the Brambles. He worked the Gregory's who lived at the Sportsman's Arms in Quanton Road and travelled for miles around by horse and cart for them, I think delivering meat. Once he took me with him. Mum, Nald and I were still living at the Brambles and he made a fuss of us but he was a terrible tease.

An honours list of the Marston boys killed in the war put up in the church and among them was one Joacim Dillon. It was thought that he had

worked as a tailor at Holden's at the top of the Green. The name fascinated Uncle Ern who called him Jo-ackerman Dillon and the poor man became the bogeyman. If I had been naughty, or sometimes just to tease, he would say 'Jo-ackerman Dillin 'ull have you'. The little narrow door from the 'house* into 'kitchen* closed on a threshold so that when left open against the wall there was a gap of about four inches between the bottom of the door and the floor. Sometimes he stood a pair of boots behind door so that just the toes showed, looking as though someone was standing behind, and he would say 'Jo-ackerman's waiting for you'. (I can remember when Auntie Kate was staying at the Brambles and was sleeping on the floor of the big bedroom up in the dark corner of the chimney, I crawled to the bottom of my bed and said to her 'Jo-ackerman 'ull have you'. 'Little beast! she said.)

After Gregory's Uncle Ern went to work as a farm hand for Dancers at Carters Lane Farm at the bottom of village. He remained there until his retirement, then worked part time for another ten years until he was 75 years of age, first of all working for Alfie Dancer and then his son Ewart. He came up every day to the .Brambles for his dinner break, always sitting in the same chair beside the fire behind the screen. If one of us was sitting there and uncle Ern opened the door, we immediately had move because we were sitting in our Ern's chair

A short time after we returned to London in 1920 he married May Newman from Granborough. They made their home in Granborough and lived in that village for the rest of their lives. He was a slim man and didn't look particularly tough (and was often referred to as 'our poor little Ern) but he must have been strong: to cope with all the jobs needed on a farm in those days, with very little help from mechanical devices in so much of his farm life. Auntie May died and he was left on his own for many years, later he had a stroke which left him with a hand which he did not have full use of and a slight speech impediment. He kept his home in a tip top condition, polishing his brass and keeping everything neat and clean. He had two sons living in the village and they and their wives helped, providing him with meals, washing etc. and had him home for meals on Sundays.

He died in December 1976 at the age of 81 and is buried in Granborough churchyard. Uncle Ern and Auntie May had three sons.

DONALD CARTER was born in 1925 in Granborough. He attended Marston school and as there were no school meals in those days went to the Brambles with Iris where Auntie Glad had a hot meal ready. I have heard him say 'Oh Auntie Glad's meat puddings', so he must have enjoyed it. When he left school he worked in a big house with his mother. Could it have been Winslow Hall? So far as I can remember he worked in the house and I feel that he was on his way to becoming a trainee butler. Then towards the end of the Second World War he was called up and served in the Army.

After he was demobbed he went home for a time and then married Jeanne (I have a feeling that she came from Winslow) and they settled in

Granborough, He started working in the building trade, and when he retired this year (1991) was Manager of the firm.

Don and Jeanne had one daughter NICOLA (NICKY). She lives in Towcester with her husband, Fred Filer, and their two children Jonathan and Harriet.

COLIN CARTER was born in Granborough probably in 1927, I think that there is less than two years between he and Don, He also went to school in Marston (and this was still the same small building with two rooms - the big room and the little room) and went to Auntie Glad for his dinner. So there were the three of them each day, Dad (Uncle Ern), Don and Col all at the Brambles. He followed in his father's footsteps and took to farming, with an especial love of horses

He married Mavis (who I believe was a London evacuee). They still live in Granborough, I think next door to Don and Jeanne. They have five children, Peter, Stephen, Keith, Anthony and Caroline. Colin takes after his mother in looks, while Don is more a Carter.

DENIS CARTOR was born in Granborough but I do not know how soon after Colin. I remember him as a little fair haired boy. I do not know where he went to school but after leaving took an interest in newspaper reporting, and I think that is what he still does.

He married Margaret Carter from North Marston. She was the daughter of Basil Carter, his father's cousin. They had two children, Emma and Matthew. Then things started to go wrong and the marriage broke up and Den has now been on his own for many years.

When he grew up he was very different from his two brothers physically - slim and very tall.

CHARLES AND GUSSIE HENLEY. When they were first married they lived in an upstairs flat in Malmesbury Road, Bow. Daddy worked in the Roman Road Library which was only about five minutes' walk away. Mum must have felt very lonely, I feel, knowing no-one after being used to a house always full of people. And then her mother died about three months after she left home.

In August 1914 the First World War broke out. At first it made very little difference, apart from some food getting a little short. Then in 1915 Zeppelin raids started and a blackout was in force at night. A railway ran at the back of the house and Mum has told me that on some nights they would become aware of a lot of talking and then realised that a train was stationed at the back and in darkness and it was the passengers they could hear. Then a Zeppelin would come into sight and cross overhead, bombs were dropped in bow but not near Malmesbury Road.

After I was born in 1916 and was about three weeks old, Daddy joined the Army, their furniture was put into store and Mum took me back home to the Brambles. We lived there until 1920 when Daddy was demobbed, He was

much later than most coming home because he was sent to Russia at the time of the revolution there. Nald was born at the Brambles in 1918 and we both grew up as country children and spoke with a Bucks accent.

I was christened at the Primitive Methodist Chapel one evening. As Mum and Auntie Glad walked down the road with me they saw Mark Price coming out of the Chapel. He had obviously forgotten the christening, he went back, found a bowl, filled it with water from the Chapel brook, and that was the holy water I was christened with. I assume that Nald was christened there too. Auntie Glad said once that for some months she took very little notice of Nald - looking after me took all her time. Then one day he smiled at her and she thought what a dear little thing he was. From then on she made much of him.

I have since learned that Nald was christened at the Chapel from water in a pudding basin. I wonder if the he from the Chapel Brook too.

I can't really remember Daddy at Marston at all, and yet he must have come home on leave and, after we settled in Bow we must have gone to Marston for holidays.

For a long I had a vague memory, or just a feeling, of something happening at night when I had been asleep but nothing more than that. Then Mum told me that Siddle (Carter) came to see them late one evening when he was home on leave. Auntie Glad, wanting to show me off, went upstairs and brought me down saying 'Your Daddy is down stairs' a stupid thing to say! When I saw Siddle (who was sandy haired) I said 'That's not my Daddy. My Daddy has black hair. So perhaps this is the half memory I had.

When we were young Auntie Glad had coconut matting to cover her floors. This was the usual floor covering in all cottages. It was very hard on little knees, so that Nald and I never crawled but shuffled along on our bottoms. The first time I stood on my own Mum and Auntie Glad were sitting on the pond bank and I was on the 'pitching' and cautiously stood up. Auntie Glad saw me and said quickly 'Look Gus', and after that every time I stood I said 'look Gus'

Auntie Glad told me about another thing. Auntie Glad and Mum were dressed in their Sunday best and I was in the pram and I looked at them and said 'I think you gals look very lovely' Cunning little thing Auntie Glad said.

One day I must have been smashing snails in their shells and Joe Warr who lived in what had been Uncle Alf's house, called to me and said that I shouldn't but I said 'I ull smash em' He never forgot it and whenever he saw me, even when I was grown up, he always said 'I ull smash em!' When I was three years old Auntie Glad took me to Aylesbury to the pictures. Beforehand people asked me where I was going and I said 'On my birthday I be go Aylesbury see 'pickins'.

I have just had one thought which might be a memory of Daddy at

Marston. We used to go for walks up Stone Hill and then Uncle Sid and someone else would hold a hand each and start running and, of course, little legs couldn't keep up and our legs just ran in the air. It was fun. Could the other one have been Daddy? I know that later on when we were bigger Uncle Sid and Uncle Lew did the same.

Daddy served in the Machine Gun Corps and sent me a round pearly brooch with the Machine Gun Corps badge, which I wore on a green beret and called it my Sheen Gun hat. I still have the badge. He was sent to Russia and didn't come home until 1920.

After he was demobbed we left Marston and went to live with Auntie Leah in Denbigh Road, East Ham, and that can't have worked out very well with two families in the one house. I remember the bedroom we had (I think that it was Connie's), it had a window looking out onto the garden and a sloping roof at one end. Auntie Leah used to try to get Nald off to sleep in the afternoons, nursing him and walking round the garden telling him stories about ladybirds until he told her 'I'm sick of ladybirds'. What she did then I don't know but in later years she laughed about it.

Daddy worked in the Roman Road Library in Bow and so had to travel from East Ham each day. Then he found that a few council houses were being built in Bow and applied for one, was successful, and in September 1920 we moved to 51 Ridgdale Street. I remember the day we came here. Mum, Nald and I were standing on the doorstep waiting for the removal van to arrive. It went straight past and had to go round the block and come to us again. I've been told that Nald was hungry and said 'Does Bow have any bread and butter?'. And then 'does Bow have any Jam'.

When we first came to Bow we were very small (I was four years old and Nald two and still in frocks). We couldn't see out of the bedroom windows, and by the time we had walked up the hall, turned onto the stairs, turned again at the top, we didn't know whether it was the back bedroom or front, so we called the rooms by the colour of the walls, i.e. the green room, the pink room and the primrose room. We didn't realise how posh it sounded until one day during the Second World War Mrs Dodd, a neighbour, was here and heard that something was in the pink room. She remarked on it and we had to explain.

I was seven and Nald five years old when Daddy died. I can't remember a lot about him, and if we hadn't got photographs of him I doubt whether I would remember what he looked like. I remember his walk better than anything, and Nald walks like him. He was a very handy man and seems able to put his things, especially carpentry. I remember once before Christmas one year he was making something and had wood and tools spread out on the old deal table in the middle of what was then called the kitchen. I asked him what he was making and was told that it was for the library to hold books in. I said that it seemed to me that it would do well as a toy bedstead. That, of course, is what it was and it was there with mattresses and bed clothes that Mum had made on Christmas morning.

The back room was then called the kitchen because there was an open fire in the corner for cooking and an oven above which never worked very well. It was mostly used to dry wood for lighting the fire. The pantry open into the room and all cooking preparations were made on the deal table, and the ironing. The gas stove, sink and copper were in the scullery, which I now call the kitchen. In those days the family lived in the kitchen.

Nald and I first went to Fairfield Road school, two or three minutes away, and Ron Christopher who lived opposite used to take us across the road (Fairfield) together with his sister, Doris, and Gladys Dean who lived three doors away. I was turned five when I first went to school. There wasn't room when I should have started at the beginning of the Easter term. All I wanted was to learn to read and couldn't wait to go to school. In the afternoons the little ones went into the hall to have a sleep on the floor. I hated this because I went school to learn to read not to go to sleep. I remember sleeping only once and was so cross afterwards. I understand that I could read in no time at all. Once we were on a bus which stopped outside a Westminster Bank. I studied the lettering and then announced to all the on the bus 'Westminster Bank that is Nald'.

Nald didn't read so quickly. He said that he liked the pictures much more. One story I have been told about him was when he had just learned what an elephant was in a picture book. Not long after Mum and Daddy were out shopping and missed him. He was found on his knees looking into a toy shop window and saying "There tis ephanat.

When Daddy was first taken ill a folding bed was brought downstairs into the kitchen, but afterwards he was moved up-stairs to the bedroom. When he was taken to hospital and brought downstairs on a stretcher he didn't see us (and later asked where the children were) as Mrs. Frost, our next door neighbour held us back. He was taken to St. Andrews hospital in Bow and died there after only a few days. When he died Auntie Leah and somebody else was here, maybe Auntie Het. Uncle Harry came back from the hospital and said that he was gone. I was sitting in the old wooden armchair (.known as Daddy's chair) by the fire. Auntie Leah felt faint and they gave her brandy. I started to cry. I don't suppose I really realised what had happened but knew something dreadful had happened to my Daddy. And they told me to shut up. I have never forgotten it. I don't know whether it was the same day or later but I remember that Auntie Kate was sitting there with Mum and Nald and I were playing on the floor. He looked up and said 'When is Daddy coming home.' He hadn't been told,

We went to Marston where Daddy is buried in the churchyard there. On the day of the funeral cousin Kit from Oving came to look after the three of us, Nald, Iris and me, while the funeral was taking place. Mum wouldn't take us there, although I think that Gramma thought we should have gone.

Nald and I always refer to him as Daddy and I have done so here as it comes naturally. I have come to the conclusion that there is always

Daddy because we weren't old enough when he regressed to Dad. Mum always referred to him in the same way. When she was in hospital just before she died she wanted to know where Daddy was.

After the funeral we stayed at the Brambles for a bit and about six months after Mum started work. She had never been out to work before, always being the middle one of nine to stay at home. The Bullen's who were in charge of the Library helped her get a job with the Poplar Borough Council in the Baths Department, I wished then, and still wish, that she had gone back to Marston to live where she knew everybody and had brothers and sisters there. She told me later that all she could see for us was farm labouring for Nald and domestic service for me, and she wanted more for us than that, not foreseeing that before we left school buses would be going to Aylesbury, some children getting scholarships to schools in Aylesbury and the older ones jobs there.

Mum first of all worked half time and on shifts, from 8 o'clock in the morning until 12 midday, or 12 until 4 o'clock, or 4 until 8 o'clock at night. She started at the Roman Road baths (slipper baths which were where people without baths at home went). The baths were opposite the Library - how miserable she must have felt. Then when we were a little older and could cope better on our own, and I expect needed more money, she started working full time and was moved to Violet Road baths and later to Weston Street (or Watts Grove as it was later renamed). Most of the time she worked in the baths and in the office (there was a laundry there where women came to wash their clothes as well and this meant more office work) half time and the other half ironing towels and overalls with a big electric iron. She burnt herself badly once, Not only did she do these jobs but on Friday nights, if she was on late duty, had to take the week's takings all the way to Roman Road baths, and so it would be gone 9 o'clock before she got home. These days it wouldn't be safe for a woman to take a lot of money through the streets, Many years later it was realised how foolish this practice was and a van called to collect the money. The man who did the collecting was Dave Adams, (the son of the Poplar MP and father of Tom Adams the actor.

When Mum first went to work and was on early turn or the midday one Mrs. Frost from next door came in to get us something to eat (there were no school meals in those days), but after we got a little older we managed on our own. Sometimes we scrambled ourselves an egg, but mostly Nald did the shopping at Bow Dairy, getting a small cream to have with banana, perhaps some ham, and mostly a cheese cake (the old fashioned sort with white icing and strips of coconut). She worked full time six days a week and on Sunday mornings every other week.

Uncle Lew came to live with us after Daddy died and how Mum managed to look after the four of us, cooking, shopping, washing and ironing, cleaning etc. I don't know. She made all our clothes, Nald's I should think until he went into long trousers and mine until I started to want things to fit better and started making my own. In spite of all this she would do no more than was absolutely necessary on Sundays this was her day of rest. I have heard her say that she couldn't have managed had she

not got two sensible children

On Saturdays when Mum was on early turn she often left a meat pudding boiling and, children though we were, we kept the water topped up with boiling water and dished it up ourselves and kept the open fire going. When we were a little older on Saturday mornings we cleared the grate, lit the fire, polished the grate, washed up, swept and dusted before going out to play, that was after we had a good old romp on the bed, doing neck rolls, head stands, somersaults, etc.

After Mum went to work we began to spend much more time at the Brambles. When the schools were on holiday and she was at work, she didn't want us running the streets, so we spent a fortnight at Easter most years (occasionally at Tonbridge or East Ham), then Whitsun and six weeks in the summer holidays. Mum came for Easter and Whitsun and for a fortnight in the summer. Sometimes we all travelled together and sometimes Uncle Side came to get us and bring us back. Whether he came all the way to Bow or met us at Baker Street I can't remember. He was able to travel cheaply or with a free pass as he was a railway employee. Other times we went by bus from Seymour Street off the Edgware Road. A bus called a Red Rover went from there to Aylesbury, took longer, but was cheaper, but this was after the buses were running between Aylesbury and Marston.

When I first remember going to Marston there were no buses. We went to Waddesdon Manor Station and were met by Joe Gregory with the carrier's cart, or sometimes a trap. When we came to a hill we all got out and walked to help the poor old horse. The first time we went after Iris was born I remember Auntie Glad being at the top of the yard to meet us and I said rather disgruntledly (I expect with a bit of jealousy) I've brought something for your baby. What it was I don't know.

Occasionally we went to Granborough Road station where we would be met by Auntie Glad and Uncle Sid and Iris (and I can remember sometimes Kit and Johnny or Bess and Frank) to help with the luggage, and we all walked across the fields to Marston.

At that time the path or yard from the road to the Brambles was like a farm yard with a five-barred gate on the road and wooden horizontal railings from the gate to the hedge. We used to use these railings for acrobatics. From the road on the right-hand side was a hovel, with usually somebody's cart, or later on a car, left there. Then came the stable and then the two-roomed derelict cottage. Coal was kept in the first part and in the room nearest the Brambles Auntie Glad did her washing. There was a fireplace which she boiled water, and the white clothes, in a heavy black oval iron boiler. There was a ladder up to the loft, and one or two little pictures and ornaments left on the mantelpiece by the last tenants. The Brambles was divided into two cottages, the far end "being occupied by Mrs Tilbury and her brother Mick Gregory.

On the other side of the yard was the pond which had a low hedge around it and a rickety looking gate for access to the water, I understand that

the only casualty there had been with all the children who had lived and played there was Uncle Ern who, when a small boy, fell in and managed to get himself out. 'I just digged my finders into the steps and crawled out*' he said.

There was only about four feet between the end of the derelict cottage, which was called the backenhouse, and the Brambles. After the narrow passage there was a patch of grass at the side of the Brambles, and across the grass was the chicken house, built on the old foundations of the pig sty. Auntie Glad always kept chickens. During our summer holidays, and sometimes at Easter, we had one for dinner, a meal much enjoyed and looked forward to, and smell of the cooking bird, onion, sage and thyme stuffing. Uncle Sid would never kill the bird but would wait until Uncle Ern came to wring its neck. When it was dead he would stand the poor thing on its feet and it would automatically walk a few steps. It was horrible but then we thought it was funny. The only time Uncle Sid tried he pulled the head right off and would never attempt it again.

After the chicken house came the brick built closet. There was a bucket under a wooden board with a hole in it. It must have smelt, but nothing like Gramma's, as it was emptied frequently and there were many gaps in the walls to let in the air. I can't remember it worrying me - I was more frightened of the spiders.

The back garden was all for vegetables in wide wide strips of cultivated ground separated by narrow grass paths. It was difficult to know where the Brambles ground ended and Mrs Tilbury's began. Once we strayed onto the other garden and old Mick was there cutting down the grass with his hook. He looked up and said I'll cut your legs off if you come here again. He was probably joking but we kept well clear of him.

The backenhouse, stable and hovel were grand places for playing especially in wet weather. Sometimes we sat in the Brambles, doorway watching the rain and lightning. It was sheltered there by the overhanging roof. It took only a few seconds to nip up the yard to the stable where Uncle Sid had fixed a swing on one of the old overhead beams. There were often more children than the three of us, i.e. Uncle Nald's boys and Jean, the Lambourne children, the Rawlings etc. Mum said that Carters was always a place where children played.

The carts left in the hovel were places to play in, and one year there was an old car. We spent the best part of our holiday in this cleaning it, pretending and dreaming. More than once Mum this, and Auntie Glad were daft enough to bring our meals up to us there.

The hovel was a three-sided wooden building with the front completely open and Miss James, the Vicar's sister, after that she went to live in the poor old cottage at the end of the village after her brother's death, when walking down the road said that there were beautiful pictures in the hovel to show us. It was where the damp had taken out of the boards and, with a bit of imagination, there were sandy beaches and

foaming waves, or perhaps a snow covered landscape.

Miss James was always dressed in black, long skirts, and was always most ladylike and well spoken. It was a terrible come-down for her after living in the vicarage all her life to come down to one of the meanest little cottages in the village. I suppose that this was all she could afford, but she never complained and conducted herself with great dignity.

There was a back door out of the stable into what was known as the backenhouse garden (it had been the garden belonging to the occupants of the backenhouse). It was a bit of a wilderness as it hadn't been tended since the cottage became empty, but there was a plum tree there and a hazelnut tree. For a few years there were piles and piles of bricks put there by Teddy Dudley who owned the ground and the Brambles. He had ideas of building on the land but it came to nothing and eventually the bricks were taken away. Stinging nettles etc. grew through the bricks and we armed ourselves with sticks and spent hours bashing a way through to make pathways over the bricks, naming them Rocky Lane, Stoney Hill, Brick Road etc. It kept us happy and occupied for hours and hours and we walked and climbed the ways many many times.

With the old buildings, the stable and swing, the hovel and its carts, bricks eggs to collect, the ash tree on the pond bank to climb, gooseberry bushes, it was a child's paradise. And, of course, there were fields all round to roam in. We spent a lot of time, mostly in the evenings, playing ball games in the road with our cousins and other village children. There were no cars then - only a few horses and carts and occasionally a bicycle.

Then there was haymaking. Auntie Glad and Uncle Sid sometimes helped local farmers and we went along too, although I don't suppose we were of much help most of the time jumping over or doing somersaults over the shocks or stooks. Haymaking was all done by hand on those days, the only help being a horse and cart to carry a load of hay to the corner of the field where the ricks would be built and occasionally an elevator to carry hay up to the top of a rick. It was a great privilege for children to be able to guide the horse.

I can only remember harvesting once. The straw scratched bear arms and legs and I got covered with little red spiders.

Then in the winter there was fox hunting. I cannot make up my mind about hunting, whether it should be banned or not. It is such an English thing, so picturesque and a lovely day out. And the poor old fox? It is the breeding of animals just for their fur for man's vanity that I find revolting. At least the fox has an outside life and a chance, the others don't. I would never again by a fur or leather coat. Animals are bred, live in cages for their short lives, and the females are turned into fur coat factories. And yet I buy leather gloves and leather shoes

But I have had lovely days out with Iris following the hunt on foot for miles, always glad to see the fox streaking away and looking as though he would get away. Hommocksing (a good old Bucks word) for miles over wet muddy fields, through hedges, over brooks, until we realised that it would be soon getting dark and we didn't know where we were, climbing any rise to get our bearings and eventually arriving home muddy, weary but happy.

The first meet was always at Winslow on Boxing Day. There were few cars in those days and everybody travelled by bus. It got more crowded at each stop on the way until it was absolutely packed, perhaps dangerously so, some standing inside, on the top deck and on the stairs, everybody in a happy mood. The bus driver would join in and go at speed over the hump-backed bridge over Winslow brook, everyone 'oohing'. The next Meet would be at Pitchcott (I can't remember how we got there), and once the Hunt met at Granborough which wasn't usual. From the Brambles window it was possible to see right up to Pitchcott when the hedges had been cut. So for hunting or not, I don't know

Uncle Sid once saw otter hunting near Granborough Road Station. He said that it was horrible - the otter stood no chance. And Mum remembered stag hunting. The stag was brought in a horse box, released, and after a bit the hounds set off. The stag was in strange unwooded country and again didn't stand a chance.

At the end of the Brambles garden was a stile which led into the field at the back. Some summer evenings we all climbed over (Mum, Uncle Sid, Auntie Glad, Dick, Iris, Nald and me, and any other children about) and played cricket and other ball games. It was a lovely field which became a wilderness after Uncle Jack and family dumped their rubbish there.

Iris always seemed to have had a bike, and I can't remember her owning, anything else. When Auntie Glad knew that I was going down she would arrange with Clarence (he was very short) for me to borrow his bike. It was, of course, a man's bike with a crossbar but I managed and we used to bike all over the place.

Sometimes Iris was still at school when we went to Marston in the summer. The schools in Bucks 'broke up' a week later than the London ones. Then we would go to meet her twice a day, once at dinner time and again in the afternoon when school finished, always dawdling along on different ways home. Opposite the school gate was where Schorne College had stood. This was for 'gentlemen's sons', started and run by Dr James, the then vicar of North Marston. When I knew it, it was partly in ruins and we would sit on the old broken wall waiting for the children to come out. There was still part of the college left standing and, although it looked in a sorry condition, the Harwood's still lived there. As far as I can remember their eight children, plus their parents. In time it was pulled down and the ground now forms the new part of the churchyard. I've still got one or two tiles which came from one of the fireplaces.

Occasionally we were allowed to stay on after we should have gone back

to school so that we could go to the Feast which case at the beginning of September. This was a real treat. There were swings, roundabouts, spinning jennies, coconut shies, real old gypsy caravans and horses, etc. on the village green, and some years they would spill over into the surrounding fields.

As time went by the caravans arriving got fewer and fewer and I think that the Second World War finished it off. When it began to decline Mum's cousin, .Bernard Carter, tried to keep it going with the help of a fairground family called Rose. Besides the side shows there would be a greased pole which the boys and men would try to climb on, and a poor little piglet which the men would try to catch. The poor thing had been greased to make it more difficult to hold. Sometimes there would be a ploughing match in one of the fields to see who could cut the straightest furrow. I remember Poddy winning it one year. The women would dress in their old family wedding shawls and a prize would be given for the best one. I have a wedding shawl upstairs which belonged to my Great Grandmother, Elizabeth Henley. Bernard also hired an old barrel organ which he put on a lorry and we (Iris and I) used to go round with other youngsters to the nearby villages, collecting money for the Royal Bucks Hospital in Aylesbury.

We took turns turning the handle to keep the music going. They would stop at the top of the Brambles yard and call for us to go along. Once there was a fair in Quainton and Mum and Auntie Glad came too. Old Tanty was there (a little the worse for drink) and kept leaning over to me and saying 'Hullo cousin'. Mum didn't like that as he had a bit of a bad name. Neither did she like it when I went with Violet into the pub with the collecting box. In fact she was horrified - you never went into a pub.

At Eastertime we often went all the way to the woods near Claydon to find primroses, later bluebells, and in the autumn hazelnuts. Easter was the Sunday School Anniversary at the Methodist Chapel and we went to the morning service. Everybody came out in their new clothes for the summer on Easter Sunday, and some of them must have been perished. We went to the morning service and the Sunday school children would be there, many of them going out to the front and reciting, Iris doing her recitation with the rest. On the Monday Will and George Buckingham, who seemed to run the chapel and the school, organised games in the Chapel Green. Then would come the scramble on the ground for them. One of them would toss handfuls of sweets in the air and the children would scramble on the ground for them. I remember Mum holding Nald and me back but Will Buckingham said 'let them go Gussie' and we joined in. When we went to the chapel service Will and George always came and spoke to Mum and shook hands solemnly with Nald and me. So many of the congregation were relatives, a lot of them who lived away from Marston coming home for Easter.

The elderly men always sat in the front and when the preacher was talking it was not unusual for one or more to interject with an 'Ah yes' or 'Amen'. Mum has told me that the old men sometimes nodded off and

once when the preacher was talking about the devil one of them woke up 'Ah bless him!, much to the amusement of the congregation. I think that it was Amos Pride

If we were at Marston on May Day, Mum and Auntie Glad made us a maypole, which was a stick decorated with flowers. It was the custom to take it round saying 'please to see me maypole hoping for a penny or two. Once we ventured as far as Aunt Sare-Ann's and another time went to Aunt Elizabeth Ann at Rosebank. She gave us some money but said *I shouldn't go any further'. She felt that it was begging I suppose. When Mum was young the children used to walk miles across the fields to outlying farms with their maypoles where they would be entertained with milk and cakes by the farmers and their families who looked forward to the visits.

When there had been heavy rain the wide ditch on the side of the road from the Brambles ran swiftly with water and we had races floating leaves, twigs and sometimes paper boats down it. In the Spring we caught tadpoles in the Chapel Brook and brought them home, and later on frogs (it was surprising how many different sorts there were) and these we put in an old tin bath. What happened to the poor things I don't know, in times of drought the Brook dried up and it was possible to creep along the tunnel under the road and come out the other side.

On fine Sunday afternoons we went for a walk, mostly along the road because we were always in our Sunday best clothes. It was the habit of many families to take a Sunday afternoon walk, Often we went up Ston (.Stone) Hill to Alderman's gated road along; Carter's Lane to the second gate (it was a gated road)) and sometimes on to the Gypsy Stone. This is an old tomb like stone set back in the ditch which is said to be the grave of the King of the Gypsies. There is a faint date on it of 1600 and something. What it is no one seems to really know. I can't say that I always enjoyed those walks, especially on hot days.

There was always so much to do and all of it amusements of our own making. Auntie Glad was marvellous, taking us up into the Quainton Hills to find the moated farm, the 'roman' the wall, the spring and the 'pitty' fields, and to Quainton.

In days gone by there must have been excavating for stone or the gravel, pits are now covered with grass and often stinging nettles at the bottom. They were grand for running down into and up again and down, I remember spraining my ankle badly one of them and being laid up for a few days after hobbling all the way home mostly with Dick's help.

When we went to Quainton, just before we got to the church, there was a low lying field which in bad weather would get flooded. At the time of a plague stepping stones were put across it so that the dead could be carried across to the church more easily. The last time I went to Quainton I couldn't find the field and spoke to the vicar about it but he obviously had no idea what I meant, so I suppose over the years the stones have been buried. At Oving, down what used to be called the

Pesthouse Lane, is an old stone house always known as the Pesthouse and here the sick were taken, so in the past there must have been plagues in the area, maybe the Death

Then in the spring we would go watercressing, mushrooming, blackberrying and nutting in the autumn, and sometimes looking for sloe for making wine. When there had been high winds set out with baskets to collect twigs for kindling and larger pieces to keep the fire going. Mum came for her two weeks holiday and then we did the usual rounds, relatives in Claydon, Oving and Granborough, and Granborough Road Station to have a picnic tea with Uncle Sid at the signal box. And, of course, a visit to the church and a climb up the steeple.

In about 1930 the first buses started to run between Marston and Aylesbury, and later on to Buckingham. They were small single decker yellow buses, no bigger than today's mini buses. They were run by Simons of Whitchurch. This caused great excitement because it was now possible to get to Aylesbury market and to the station. Before people either walked there which took all day or hired the carrier. The buses also ran a sort of parcel delivery and collection service, so sometimes it could be a very slow journey. I remember the first driver, Teddy Belgrove, and he drove the buses for years and years, long after the Red Rover buses took over, I believe until his retirement

As we grew older we were able to travel on our own to Buckingham and Aylesbury, and once ventured as far as Wendover where we had a lovely day struggling up Coombe Hill, which is the highest point in the Chilterns, to the monument. This was erected to commemorate the men of Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire who fell in either the Crimean War or Boar War, I can't remember which. Many years later it was struck by lightning and was in pieces but was repaired and re-erected

North Marston in those days was almost self-supporting. There was Cox's shop in Quanton Road which sold groceries and sweets, and the daughters Lizzie and Elsie also did dressmaking and gave piano lessons. Then at the Cross was Uncle Ted's barbers shop in the old gypsy caravan. Further up was the Post Office where postcards of local views, stationery, pencils etc. were sold besides stamps and the usual Post Office things, and of course pensions were paid out, next door was the bake 'us where they made their own bread, delivered around the nearby villages, and where they would make and/or bake your cake. At the top of the village green was Holden's shop, which in its hey-day had been a flourishing tailoring business, specializing in servants' liveries, hunting pink. They then just sold lengths of cloth, reels of cotton, etc., although there was still a hunting pink jacket in the window. The next building was Baker's shop and house. They also sold groceries and sweets, and cleaning materials, and it was kept by Mrs. Baker and her daughters Emily and Ida. At the back of Baker's was Franklin's shop and he sold groceries and meat. I understand that when Mr. Franklin opened his shop it was a great blow to Mrs. Baker as it took a great deal of her trade.

On Tuesday afternoons, which was early closing day, Ida Baker would go round the village with a big wicker basket in which were fancy cakes which she hoped to sell to do a little more business. She always came to the Brambles and when we were there we would spend some pocket money and buy our choice for tea. Then on Thursday's Mr. Young, the greengrocer from Oving, would come and we would buy pears or plums etc. These were simple things we looked forward to. Auntie Glad always had a cup of tea ready for these visitors, including the butcher from Whitchurch and the coalman.

Next to Baker's shop was the smithy where we sometimes stood in the doorway and watched the forge being pumped up with bellows, and the blacksmith, Henry White, making horse shoes and shoeing. He also did a great deal of wrought ironwork and I believe that the gates into the church are some of his work. At the beginning of Portway was the slaughterhouse and further down the road was George Carter (Tanty) the cobbler. He was Mum's cousin and we sometimes visited, mostly to see his wife May. He was a bit of a bad lad and she eventually left him. He would bring out his silver bugle which he had played when Marston had a band, and his gun which he sometimes let us have a shot with. Then there was the milk round which delivered milk round to the nearby villages. Our cousin Harold Carter managed this for many years and before him Mr Gould from the Sportsman's Arms. Great Uncle Jack Carter lived at the bottom of the school hill and he did a small trade in greengrocery.

There were three pubs, the Wheatsheaf, the Sportsman's Arms and the Bell Inn. Now only the Bell is left. Besides the Church there was the Primitive Methodist Chapel and the Wesleyan Chapel. The Methodist Chapel has been closed for many years.

There are no shops now, not even a Post Office.

Basil Waters recalls some memories of a Buckinghamshire village of 46 years ago

I Remember

North MARSTON Village, which lies on the Aylesbury to Buckingham road, between Oving and Granborough, was the village of my childhood and formed a vivid patch on my memory.

My father was Vicar from 1929 to 1938, virtually the whole of the 30's , the final years of peace, and looking back I recall just how happy a village it was despite low wages and a depressed agriculture.

To a large extent it was still a horse dominated community and Henry White's forge was to me and my brother and sister as well as to many other children a source of wonder. Henry himself was a character, a born humourist and no mean craftsman. I believe that some of his handiwork can be seen in the imposing gates to Waddesdon Manor. Many a carthorse I have watched him shoe and the throaty sound rekindling the dying embers of his

forge I vividly recall.

Besides Henry White there were several other businesses in the village, few I suspect still remaining unless their proprietors have an unusual gift of longevity. There was Holden's the Tailors, where hunting pinks and other garments familiar to both the Bicester and Whadden Chase were on display in the window. Mathew Heiden was one of the churchwardens and Henry Cheshire, a baker of renown, was the other.

The two Miss Bakers and their Mother ran a shop nearby which sold everything from **Nol chickfood to tiquorials** whilst Franklyn's was a general grocery and butcher's shop. Mr. Franklyn owned the slaughter house which the distressing squeals of pigs would sometimes rend the air on a quiet afternoon. The only other shop at that time was along the Quainton road and was a sweet shop run by Mrs Cox and her daughter who then did some dress making and gave piano lessons.

Other businesses in the village were Ted Anstiss the Barber, Carter's the shoe mender on Portway and the Post Office presided over by Alfred Cheshire, brother of Henry, and his wife.

There were three public houses still functioning, the Bell in the middle of the village, the Wheatsheaf near the Memorial Hall and the Sportsman's Arms on the Quainton Road. A former Inn which had been called the Armed Yeoman had been turned into a dwelling house and was lived in by Henry Anstiss and his wife and was an attractive thatched house.

The carrier was a man called Joe Gregory who lived near the slaughter house and ran a four-wheeled waggon. I remember him collecting the trunks to take to Winslow station when my brother and sister went back to school.

There were other tradesmen who began visiting the village in the years I remember. Mr. Young the greengrocer from Oving. Mr. Parrott the butcher from Whitchurch and Mr. Culley the coalman from Quainton. All these men had appropriate horse drawn vehicles.

Later came a fishmonger - Mr. Brown - from Aylesbury whose name I think was Kemp. But all these had motorised transport and must of started coming to the village in the latter part of the decade.

In 1929 a bus service was starting run by a Mr. Young and his daughter but they were bought out by Simons Yellow buses from Whitchurch in due course and later the Yellow busses gave way to the Red Rover company. I

remember being terrified when the first double decker arrived and refusing for a long time to "go upstairs" as I had heard someone say that it was top heavy!

Hay making in those days still meant making hay, tossing and turning it before making it into ricks. Later these would be thatched and the hay cut with vicious hay knives into trusses on cold winter mornings for the cattle. There were few hay cutters and most of the fields were still mown by scythe and the hay loaded on carts and ricked by pitchfork. The few hay elevators that there were driven by a horse that would walk in endless circles to provide the power to drive the mechanism.

Because public transport was still in its infancy there were many people who had never left the village and there was a strong community feeling. Most of this spirit was centred around either the parish church- St. Mary's -or the two Chapels and their respective organisations.

When my father was offered the living the old vicarage was in a dilapidated state and was found to be in an advanced stage of dry rot as well as being in a poor structural state and it was decided that it should be pulled down and replaced with a new house.

The old vicarage had stood very close to Glebe Farm and it was decided to re-site the new one in another part of the grounds. While this was being built we lived in Vine Cottage, next to the church and almost opposite the vicarage. Due to some trouble with the builders there was a delay over finishing the building, and one end of the house was roofless for the best part of a year and eventually this part, by the front door, was built with some of the attractive stone of the old house.

Far off days, before main sewer or drainage, before very many houses had electricity and there were few motor cars, now it may sound somewhat primitive but I wonder if in the intervening years the characters and the character of the North Marston 46 years ago that changed and if there remains something of the old spirit still ?



Now some memories of The Brambles itself:

In time the hovel, stable and backenhouse were pulled down and the bricks removed, fortunately not before we were past playing. With the old buildings gone Auntie Glad had lost the coal storage place and her washing facilities, and so the barn was built at the end of the Brambles, and a way knocked through the end wall for access. At one end of the barn was a fireplace on which she boiled water for washing and coal was kept at the other end. The barn had one big advantage, especially in wet weather, as it made the dash to the closet much shorter.

The Brambles was a long low house, surprisingly spacious inside. There were no upstairs windows in the front. The roof had been thatch but during the first world war, when thatcher's were in short supply, the thatch had been covered with sheets of corrugated iron. Many cottages in the village and in the surrounding area were treated in this way. The roof overhung the front walls by a foot or more, which kept the ground outside the door dry.

There were three outside doors in the front, one into Mrs. Tilbury's cottage, one into the 'house' and the other into the end room where once, when the coal business was in operation, the coal had been stored. Why there was a door there at all is a puzzle^ but it must have been there for many, many years. Outside it was a large, worn oblong stone forming the doorstep. When the barn was added this doorway was blocked up and replaced by a window. Outside the door into the house a millstone formed the doorstep.

I don't know whether the room which you stepped into from the barn ever had a name. It was divided from the place at the back by a wooden partition and the back part was called the dairy. Here were kept the big wide shallow earthenware pans in which the drinking water was kept, and on a table against the wooden partition was a small high earthenware bowl where we washed ourselves. The water in this bowl was used time and time again. The inner wall of the dairy was the back of the huge chimney and this you walked round to get into the 'house' through another door.

The house ran from back to front of the cottage, was very low ceiled, as were all the rooms, and had a fireplace with a Tudor shaped arch over where once had been a chimney corner. Now, however, it was ruined by a cooking stove and side oven. At one side of the open-fired stove was a narrow cupboard door (in what had at one time been part of the chimney corner. This cupboard was later blocked off. It must have covered quite a large area at one side of the chimney going back to the wall of the dairy and under the stairs, and I sometimes wondered what went on in there. The chimney was so large that it was possible to look up it to the sky. Had poor little chimney sweeps had to climb up there in days gone by? There were certainly bits sticking out from the sides which could have been used for climbing

I remember the back window being a shaky leaded-paned one which after many years was replaced by one with a wooden frame. In the far corner of the room was a door which opened onto the stairs.

There were about five creaky stairs, and then a tiny flat place, then a sharp right turn with three more steps into the large "bedroom. There was no door. There was one small window in the eaves in the back wall- This room was large enough for at least two double beds. There were three posts, one of which was said to have been part of a four-poster bed propping up the ceiling beams. One wall was straight, two had sloping roofs and the fourth was the chimney which went right through the house, and there was quite a large corner space alone by the chimney on the opposite side to the stairs.

Back to the small landing; In front of you was a square doorway (there had been a door here but it was taken away some years ago because it was infested with woodworm; under which you crept and at the same time mounting three more steps into the second bedroom. This had the same sloping Walls, one straight wall which was the back of the chimney, and a much larger window in the side wall of the cottage. The floor here sloped so badly that the legs at the bottom end of the bed were propped up on blocks to stop it sliding out of the side wall. This room was smaller but would still have easily taken a single and double bed.

Downstairs again; In the front corner of the house was a low narrow door, through which even I had to creep, into what was called the kitchen. This room had originally gone from back to front of the cottage (when it was called the lace'us where my Great Grandmother, Anne Carter, had held her lace making school). When the end of the cottage was blocked off and made into separate cottage, the kitchen had been halved to give cupboard space to the new cottage. Through the kitchen called so because this is where the crockery and cooking things were kept, was a spacious room which had been Mrs. Tilbury's living room until her death when Auntie Glad had taken over the whole house and had had the old doorway opened up.

In the front wall of this room was an outside door and a small window on either side. The floor was of red quarry tiles, as were all the downstairs floors, but here it was level, but in other other places very uneven, so that when sitting at the table for meals you had to know just where to place the chair. There was a corner cupboard at one side of the fireplace and on the other a, window looking out at the back. In Mrs. Tilbury's time there had been a cooking stove and oven there, which was replaced by a small Victorian iron fireplace with red tiles up each side. This had once been in the College before it was demolished. It was later replaced by a modern tiled surround which was so wrong. At right angles to the window were two doors, one into Mrs. Tilbury's pantry, which Auntie Glad always called the furthest pantry, and behind the other door were the stairs.

There were about six steps up to a small square landing and at right angles one shallow step into the single bedroom. The window was on the staircase wall at the back of the cottage. This room had one straight wall, one sloping wall at the back of the bed, and a wooden partition between it and the larger bedroom. Up one shallow step was a door (the only bedroom with a door) into the roomy double room. This had two

sloping walls and the straight end wall with a good sized window. In one sloping wall was a small iron fireplace which in a bedroom must have been very unusual and I wonder if it was ever used?

The Brambles was a brick and timber framed building, the bricks being painted white (which I always felt was wrong) and the wooden beams were black. At each corner stood a rainwater butt and in later years a huge corrugated iron one along the middle of the back wall. The ceilings were very low and in only one place near the fireplace would Uncle Lew (6ft 2½in) stand up. The inside walls were papered, which again I thought was wrong -they should have been left white with the beams showing. Nevertheless it was a lovely, homely, comfortable old place and had been lived in by our family, to my knowledge, as far back as the 1850s, and perhaps beyond.

After the old buildings were pulled down, and I was sorry to see them go, it opened the cottage up to the road. The yard became more a path. The pond was filled in with some of the rubble and became a slightly sunken flower garden. There was now half an acre to cultivate with some flowers, mostly vegetables, and some fruit trees and fruit bushes. This must all have been hard work. It was altogether a hard life. There was the garden, hedge cutting, cooking on an open fire, coal to be heaved around, wood to be cut, water heated in the big boiler in the barn, fetching all drinking water from the pump, the contents of closet buckets to be emptied and buried, paraffin to be carried home for lamps, housework and cooking. In the summer Auntie Glad did start to cook on paraffin stoves in the barn which I felt wasn't always safe.

Then in the late 1930s water was brought to Marston. A reservoir was built in the hills and water piped to the surrounding villages. But it was some years before all cottages were supplied, some not being able to afford to have the work done. In the Brambles a sink was installed near the barn door and this meant no more carrying out of used water to an outside drain. And, of course, no more traipsing to the village pump with yoke and buckets for drinking water. Many years before someone had tried to bring water to the villagers and had had taps put in a few places along the road, but these were made of iron, were rusty, and the water was coloured and cloudy.

A few years after the water electricity arrived, although again many could-not afford to have it wired in at first. This meant no more candles and oil lamps and no more fires for cooking in summer as electric cooking stoves were now possible, water heaters, wirelesses and helps to an easier life like vacuum cleaners, electric irons, etc. etc.

After that came the sewers which operated at the top part of the village but never as far as the Brambles. The land from Joe Warr's sloped down to the end of the village and the sewer was too near the surface for people living below there to take advantage.

Except for two years when I went camping and when we stayed with Auntie Kate in Brighton, and the seven years I was married, I spent a holiday

with Iris every year to 1978. I was never ready to come home, especially when I was younger, and must have worried Mum when half an hour before the bus was due I was still up the village playing around with Odd and some of the village boys and girls. In the train when the advertising hoardings began to appear and I knew that London wasn't far off, I've shed many a tear.

In 1978 the Brambles was sold. I felt that I had been cut off from my roots, my bolthole and the place I always looked upon as home was gone. I had always been so proud of my country back-ground, family and ancestors, and now I felt that I was a Londoner, something I had never wanted to be. Apart for days there, mainly for funerals, I haven't been back, Marston to me, apart from the church, is Quainton Road, The Brambles, Stone Hill, Stewart Lane and Carter's Lane, and I felt that I couldn't walk down Quainton Road and not be able to turn into the Brambles gate.