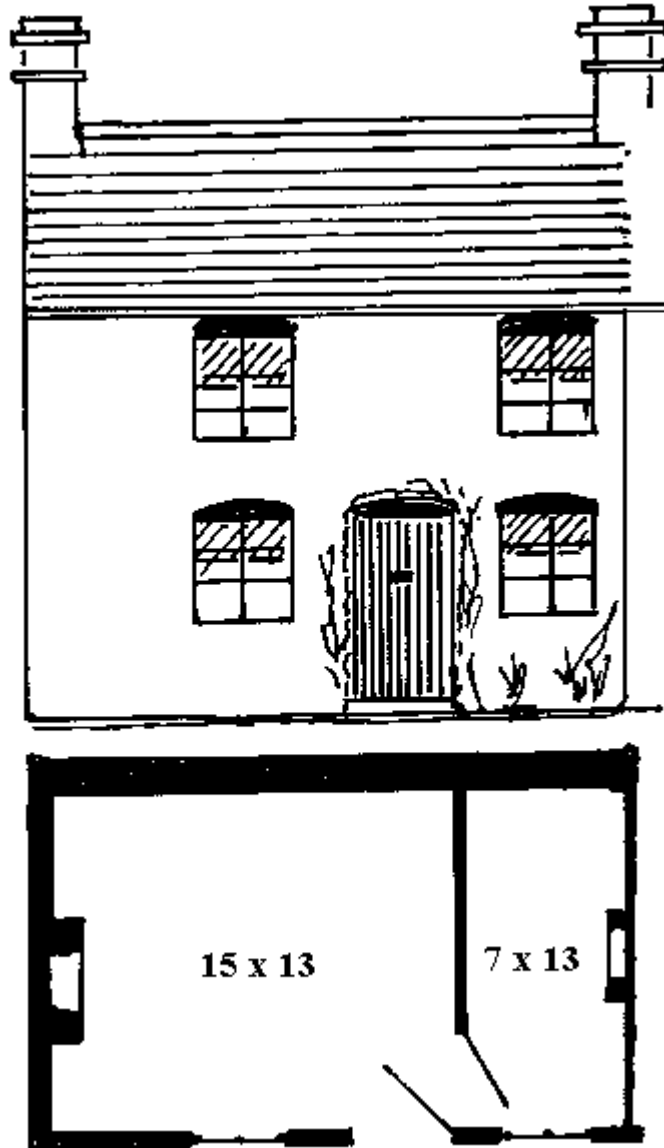


## The Cooknells of Cropredy Green



By Mabel Durrant - Edited by Pamela Keegan

- CROPREDY HISTORY - 1 1991
- Copyright @ Pamela Keegan 1991.
- First published December 1991.
- Reprinted November 1992.
- WWW August 1999.
- Originally produced and printed at Ty Gwyn.

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## INTRODUCTION

Mrs Mabel Kate Durrant nee Cooknell was born on the 18th of July 1896, the fifth child of eight children. They lived in the rear cottage of two, whose gable end faced west, across the Green at Cropredy, Oxfordshire.

Cropredy was not a large village. It formed a trade center for the surrounding area. Banbury, the nearest market town, lies just over four miles to the south. The railway allowed easy access to Leamington, Coventry and Oxford, but to reach towns to the east, older forms of transport were needed. The station was often crowded on a Sunday evening, as visiting relatives departed for their new homes in the cities. Girls could, and did, take advantage of the trains to find work in London. Mabel left when 22, never to live here again. Like so many who departed, news about the village was always appreciated and visits home eagerly planned. Mrs Durrant's own memories were very vivid and constantly recalled, enabling her to write them down, although seventy years had passed.

It was entirely due to a misunderstanding, in 1983, that we can now benefit from her correspondence to me. Following the production, by her brother Edgar, of a Cooknell family tree, Mabel was astonished to find it incorrect in their dates of birth. At home in Phoenix town, Arizona, the family Bible had the birth dates written inside the cover by their Mother. Mabel had come over in June and been brought to Cropredy by her sister Gladys, and her brother-in-law Frank Auton. This was her first visit in 26 years and everywhere things had changed and now this! She promised Gladys she would write to me with the correct information. I had been responsible for Edgar's copy. The research for the Cooknell family had been thoroughly done by Mr Fred Cooknell of Sulgrave. My contribution was only to provide the baptisms and burial dates from the Registers, which caused the confusion. Mabel was soon happy with the explanation and being of a generous nature, was soon volunteering to help in any further enquiries.

In answer to my questions, letters began to pour across the Atlantic. "You will need a day or two off to peruse all this!" she joked, as a fat Fifteen page epistle arrived, to be closely followed by two more. Dispensing with all headings, Mabel shot into page one and continued, only squeezing a little about her present life in at the end.

One letter asked, "Did I send this issue to you in a previous letter? It seems familiar to me, perhaps it is because I think it all out before I start to write, so maybe I have not repeated myself?" She hardly ever did.

If some dates appear incorrect, I have not changed them, except to add an alternative in the appendices. For the trip around the village, it must be mostly during her school years up to about 1910. One difficulty doing this is when people move from one cottage to another, as Mrs Legg appears to have done.

While Mrs Durrant was writing to me, I was visiting Mrs Gertrude Mold nee Pettifer, who was also born in 1896. They enjoyed hearing what the other had to say, but continued to firmly record their version. This actually achieved a great deal more, that otherwise would now be lost.

An example of this came in a letter, early in March 1984. It also brings out the different lines on which their books developed. Mabel wrote "I haven't seen her since I ran into her and one of her sisters in London. We happened to see each other on the street. I was a widow and Pamela was about two and a half. Gerty is around my age, I think two months my senior, and I believe she got a silver watch from the school for, Never Absent Never Late, for five years. That beat my bronze medal! But I was happy with that...Please remember me to her. We did not mix too much, only at school. It seems the Chapel children kept mostly to themselves and did not bother about Church goers too much. There used to be quite a lot of dissension between us at times, that was the way of life apparently. We used to go to a Chapel service at times, but I cannot recall a Chapel goer attending Church." This of course being before the first war. Regular joint services have been going on now, for years, in both buildings.

Letters and news from Cropredy, brought great pleasure to her. "We enjoyed reading Mr Roland Cherry's book and I got carried away, it was almost as though I were there, it brought back so many memories." Writing and receiving letters from her sister and brothers, and now nieces and nephews, has given rise to plenty of practise. Mabel has a long tradition of getting her thoughts and remembrances onto paper. After a while I asked for permission to put the letters together with a view to publication.

"You have my full permission to use any of the information I have given you, it is all true as I remember it. I would not attempt to write any of my memoirs for publication, so I will leave that"...to you. "I will stick to my crochet and knitting as they are my two pet hobbies." It has unfortunately been six years before an opportunity arose to do this.

The material from the letters has had to be arranged in order. Any later information was then threaded into the original. Some of the answers came from questions, sent to try and gain some insight into what living in Cropredy was like. How did a daughter of a conservative, Church of England, tradesman develop? Were Gertrude Pettifer's tales different, because she was brought up to attend the Methodist Church? Their reactions to certain subjects were quite different.

Not all Cooknells were church and trade. Many Pettifers did not belong to temperance groups. It is not possible to generalise for family groups. Rather better to let their storey stand and just enjoy the flow of Mabel's and Gertrude's tales. Yet differences will out. Mabel recalls her Mother's opinions very clearly. No doubt they were expressed in the privacy of the home, for she was taught to be always respectful to others. Religious and political views could not be hidden, however, in a village. Mabel recalls Cropredy only as her memory dictates. Gertrude did the same. Some will say they both have it all wrong. Each though is entitled to their memories faithfully reproduced. How dull if we all agreed. To discuss a point brings out something forgotten. To argue a little more about the subjects, involves us all.

Another topic I hoped to enlarge upon was the housing situation at the turn of the century. Mrs Cooknell is always spoken of with affection. A cheerful mother bringing up a happy family of five boys and three girls in a two bedroom cottage. One solution was to overspill into grandparents cottages, and fortunately the family were spaced out over nineteen years. Their cottage, one of a pair, had only just been rebuilt out of an old stone building, possibly once part of an older house. The cottages faced north and were double fronted. Each of the four rooms had a two light window, of which one opened. Something that did not happen in several cottages, even in the 1880's. Cooknell's chose the rear one. Why? For their new neighbour had two extra windows facing west over the Green, in the stone gable. The fronts are not exactly the same, as Thomas's had old Cropredy bricks with new window surrounds, but the other cottage had factory made bricks. The stairs ran straight up opposite the front door, leaving just room for a pantry with a small window under them. Mabel and her nephew Denis Hickman have described the living room.

In 1897 the village had 85 cottages (two thirds of all the dwellings) only paying one shilling a week rent. The ten other cottages, some with a trade attached, paid up to six pounds per annum. The remaining properties paid more and were generally classed as houses. Thomas Cooknell senior paid one shilling in 1897, but when the coal business developed, his rates rose accordingly. Mabel's aunt Mary lived in a dearer cottage in Church Lane, and her Grandma Cooknell moved into Woodview later, which also paid higher rates. Did this influence the status of the tenants?

Harriett Cooknell had the advantage of a wash house and only had to share the toilet with the Pargeters. This was an accepted custom, but nonetheless could cause friction. In this instance both were very considerate neighbours and managed to get on well together. Other Cropredy cottages shared one toilet between four families, though by then the Health authorities were demanding one between two. In the High Street eight families had the inconvenience of having to share one wash house on a rota system. On the subject of trying to be a good neighbour, we were told that Thomas Cooknell spent some evenings with his friend and landlord Mr Amos at a Bourton Pub, and how, unlike some, he would creep back quietly, so as not to disturb the Pargeters, or Cherrys.

Bath night for the woman and girls, meant sending the men along to the thrift club at the Nose. Bathing in a bungalow bath was not favoured by Mabel, which is one of the reasons she gave for remaining away. Only a third of the properties enjoyed College water, and although it ran past their cottages, Mr Amos must have considered their shared well sufficient.

Mabel, and all but one of her brothers, left Cropredy. The majority of teenagers had always left the village. Yet since the 1870's the numbers who left had risen. Many emigrated in their twenties and the average age of those left behind was rising. Most were strong young men and women, but even the chesty were being moved up the hill, by Dr Bartlett, or to warmer climates. By 1911, 450,000 young adults left the country yearly. Several warned of the dangers of losing Britain's future. At the start of the medicals for soldiers in 1914, it was found that 40% of those left, were unfit to serve. From 1871 Cropredy's population fell from 520 to 436 in 30 years. Bourton lost even more. Those who remained found business diminishing as the agricultural depression deepened. Several tradesmen expanded by starting a smallholding, especially if they already had to

pasture their horse. The wives and children found themselves with extra responsibilities. Thomas Cooknell did later on have a cow, but by then the family had grown up. Like most villagers they kept a pig, which helped also to provide good growth on the allotment. Nearly everyone needed their plot down the Oxhey road, or next to the school. Half of these were kept by men with non agricultural jobs. The allotments played an important part in the economy of almost two thirds of the village.

Sometimes it is easier to gain information by listening, as I did with Mrs Gertrude Mold, Mr and Mrs Arthur and Lucy Pettifer and many others. Even then it can take several visits to cover many aspects of one subject. So many were never asked or listened to. Not because they had nothing to say. On the contrary, everyone has something of real value to add. No, the fact is that one person cannot cover more than a few households. It would also have been rude and presumptuous to try. A few visits and it was my gain entirely, for their talk of the past was something I had never experienced before. In the end it was a case of rationing the visits, so as not to take advantage of their generous natures. How they are missed. The same happened with the correspondence. Dare I write straight back? Something outside myself was forcing on the search. In return let us hope the pleasure and friendships that evolved were mutual. Whatever has been written or spoken to me, would of course have been forever lost, without the wholehearted enjoyment of some people in communicating to others. Especially those like Colin Shirley and Mabel Durrant, who loved to think and write about Cropredy. I hope we have not offended anyone.

In the Bakers and the Carriers Daughter a little background to Church Lane was given. In this book I have tried to do the same for the Green. The material has come from the Parish Chest, the Brasenose College muniments room, the Oxford Record Office, the Parish Council records and a Cropredy Grave survey. I would like to thank all those who so kindly helped in my enquiries and would also like to express my appreciation to all those who have entrusted their photographs to me, to allow copies to be taken from them. Pamela Keegan.1991.

Pamela wrote to say that her mother Mabel Kate Durrant nee Cooknell died on the 30th of July 1994 aged 98.

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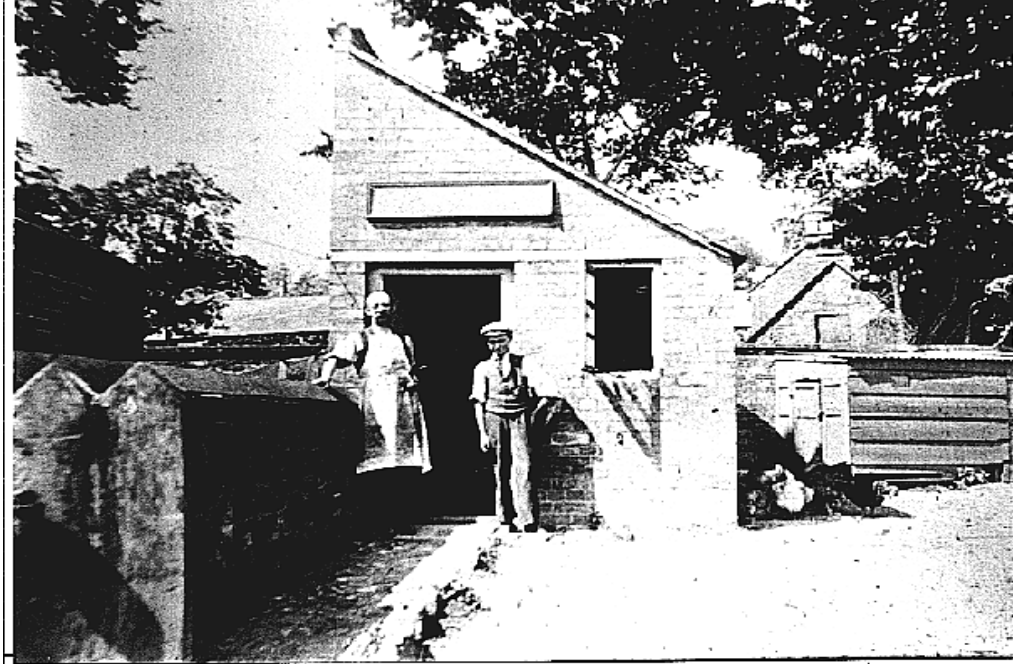
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## 1. Mabel Kate Cooknell



1. Croredy Green c1910.



2. Thomas Cooknell & William 1903.





3 & 4. Shoe shop - 1983

My Father was Thomas Cooknell, a Cropredy man. Mother, Harriet Alexander, came from Brailes. Her sister Mary had married Jack French and lived at Oathill Farm, Cropredy. One day Mother came by train to visit them for a few days. When she got off the train she was looking for her sister, as she was expecting to be met. A young man spoke to her and asked her where she wanted to go. She told him and he said, "I know Mrs French and I will take you there!"

This young man was Thomas Cooknell, my Dad, and he fell in love and later married Harriet. I thought it was so romantic when Mother told me and she told me many times at my request.

My Grandfather Thomas Cooknell had the coal business. I am not sure if his Father had it first. Later my Uncle Stephen took over. Dad did not want it. He was the village postman as a young man and was also apprenticed with Mr George Pargeter for shoe repairs. Mr Pargeter had his little shop at the back of the passage next to my Aunt Ellen's house in Chapel Row. Dad later started his own business.

When Dad married Mother they lived in the brick house on the north side of the Green, until the cottages opposite were built. Mr Amos owned those. Mother had the choice of the two cottages and choose the one not facing the Green. Mr Amos sold the two cottages to the Cherry's and they altered them after Mother died.



Mother's house, and number one, always got their drinking water from the pump on Cherry's lawn. That was the stipulation when Mr Amos had them built. There was a wash house outside and Dad installed a copper for boiling clothes. Her washing utensils were three large oval tubs, a handbowl for baling water and a bucket. The soaps we used were Sunlight, in bars, Lifebuoy, and Fels Napthu. We used it for baths, also for hair. Mother used Pears soap always for our faces, it was her favourite toilet soap. The Sunlight soap was all purpose and it used to come in 1lb bars. Mother always had a good stock on hand and used it in turn. Recketts blue came in small squares, and Mother used to tie one of these in a piece of sheeting and dip it in her rinsing water, until she got it looking nice and blue for white garments, such as sheets and pillow slips. This we called the blue bag.

How I remember wash days. What a lot of work, but we managed. We were all little when Mother did have Mrs Allitt from Great Bourton to help with the washing, but Mother soon tired of that and preferred to do her own. Mother had long wire clothes lines towards the traditional pigsty and next door used them too. Also Dad had an iron rack made for airing clothes. This fitted over the range higher up and Mum used to put paper on the rack to lay her clothes on to air. A very nice contraption. Dad also put up the hand rail on the stairs so that we would have something to hold on to.

The floors downstairs were red and dark blue tiles, but the pantry had a brick floor. Mother had a very nice range in the living room. It did not have a water section, but she kept a huge copper kettle on the range with rainwater for our daily wash up. The pump water was good drinking well water and we used to fill a large earthen bowl in the pantry every day. Mother just loved the range and she would not have an electric one. Until she became ill she kept it shiny and bright. The room on the right going into the house was mostly used by us children. Mum and Dad preferred the warmth of the range. Also I imagine they had a quieter time. On Sundays Dad lit a fire for us in the "parlour." I thought it was quite cosy. We played games though not on a Sunday. Later after we had all left home Mother used it as a store room. Regarding our little parlour that was turned into next doors bathroom before I left England in 1957. Ivy Cherry showed me the new look for our cottage. A kitchen and bathroom above was built onto the end of the house knocking down the wall by the kitchen range and the end of Mother's bedroom.

Mrs Harris was the village dressmaker and I think several ladies in the village did ordinary sewing. I knew several people had sewing machines When Grandma died Dad asked if I would like her machine and I said "I think not, it is a treadle." It could not be used as a hand machine like Mother's, but no doubt Grandma's was quite an ancient one. Mother did not use her treadle very much, she liked to sew upstairs by her bedroom window. Dad used to carry it upstairs for her.

Our toilet was at the back of the wash house, red brick with blue and red bricks on the floor. One large seat and a lower smaller one for the kids. This was emptied twice a year usually they picked frosty nights. After Dad died my Brother John did it and it made him ill. He said he would never do it again. Cherry's got rid of that deal and had a modern toilet put in the hovel next to Mother's wash house, but she had to keep a pail of water there to flush it, as there was no pull chain flush. This served the two houses.

Dad built a shed at the rear of the house. Coal was stored there, also wood with a chopping block and room for Dad's and the boys bicycles. I used to love to chop wood for kindling and did quite a lot. This of course my Brother's liked as it was their job. The coal was Uncle Steve's. I did not ride in his cart it was TOO BLACK, but we did get rides in his other carts that were used at haymaking times.

I think most items were repaired by the male in the house. It seems to me my Brothers had to do their own repairs on their bicycles. Dad did his. Dad's penny farthing, I do not know where, or if, he had it repaired. He was not using it at the time I was born, but I do remember my older Brother's used to take it up Backside and try to ride it. I think they had many spills. It was kept in the barn, I think, in Uncle Steve's rickyard opposite Bonham's. I do not know what happened to it eventually. My Grandma bought it for him before he married Mother. I remembered a photo of him standing by his treasured penny farthing.

There was a pigsty for each cottage. I remember a lot about those days. At killing time a Mr Cowley used to kill Dad's pigs and on those occasions Mother kept me home from school, to help look after the younger ones and do other chores. She worked hard with whatever they did to pigs, in making lard, pork pies, crackling and whatever. I was the only girl until I was eleven when Gladys arrived, so I had plenty of jobs to do. Inwardly I did resent my pesky Brothers at times, as it seemed they did not do much and they always made a fuss when Dad wanted them to help him in his allotment. This was past the bridge on the Oxhay [Mollington] Road. Many times he said he would rather do the work himself, but they had to do some. Often Mother and I used to walk down and gather different veggies and bring them home. How we used to love the new fresh produce and there was always plenty and over, so Dad used to give a lot away to many who couldn't raise their own.

Dad was very active in politics and used to campaign for the conservatives. They had the use of Mrs Joyce Allitt's front room. They also met at the Brasenose Inn. I know after the results they had a superb dinner at a Hotel in Oxford. Dad used to go and he told us all about it. He was also a Special Constable during the first World war.

He had a good shoe business and used to make shoes for a lot of the wealthier people we had in Cropredy at that time. He stoked up his fire for the night in very cold weather and he also kept and looked after his chickens in the garden there. Dad's workbench had a padded seat at one end, the rest of it was structured in small compartments for different utensils, nails, wax, sprigs etc. Mr Will Shirley's was a duplicate. He sat near the window and Dad sat with his back to the wall near Harriss's. There was plenty of light for them. It was a wooden floor and overhead a large rack where Dad stored his large leather pieces. The children used to go in there and Dad would let them hammer a few nails in the floor, but he did not encourage them to stay too long and told them when to leave. At French knitting time he would put little sprigs in cotton reels for them.

Dad bought his leather from Johnson and Brothers in Banbury. Dad always dealt with them and he used to go into Banbury frequently for it and it always was the best. Usually it got to Cropredy via the Carrier's cart of Mr Fred. Tasker.

Dad had shoe repair customers in the two Bourtons, Williamscothe, Wardington, Mollington, Claydon, a few in Banbury and in Appletree also. He used to make shoes for the two Adams brothers who were wealthy farmers. Mr Fred Adams was Freddie Hughes godfather. The other villages did have a shoe repair man, but most of them preferred Dad's work.

Mother and I often delivered shoes to Great Bourton in the evenings. Mother loved to walk so we would ask Dad if he had any shoes to deliver. He did sometimes pick them up at the pub, but mostly we used to deliver them and often we collected the money too, and some paid monthly and some did not pay at all, but usually people were pretty good at paying. Some however owed Dad at the time of his death, so they got away with it. Dad was a master craftsman and he had a man helping him for years. William Shirley. He used to repair beautifully and was always so polite. He lived in a cottage down Creampot Lane and was a bachelor.

Dad usually bought most of the groceries each Thursday and they often were delivered by Mr Tasker, unless Mother only needed a few, then Dad would take a carpet shopping bag and bring that filled with groceries back by train and he always brought a bag of sweets for us. Mother did not care too much for shopping, but occasionally she would go into Banbury when we needed other than food. She made all the boys shirts and Dad's as well as a lot of my clothes.

Mr Godson was the baker. We always bought our bread and flour from him. Mother always cooked her own joints of meat and made her own cakes. I do not know if Dad ever bought meat from Mr Godson, but I know we had some very large joints of roast beef, lamb and pork until the first world war. Dad was a great one for meat.

[Mary Ann's son Denis Hickman wrote about his Grandma Cooknell] "She was rather small with rosey cheeks...If I had any problems I would go to her and there was always a large slice of cake for me. Caraway seed cake was her speciality. I remember so vividly the living room where she spent so much time. The polished brass and blackleaded fireplace or range, with the high shelf above surrounded with a fancy fringe. The heavily embroidered table cloth was on the large table in the middle of the room. Paisley patterned heavy curtains with lots of tassels at the window. Many, many photos of her large family all around. Above the door a large bundle of dried mint. What I remember above all was a boomerang hung on the wall and tied round the centre with a coloured ribbon. She told me it was from Thomas in Australia. When I asked what the ribbon tied to the middle was for, she told me that he sawed it in half to get it through the post. I have a vague notion that she had a large picture of Royalty on a wall.

Her easy chair faced the window beside the range. Behind her chair was a large cupboard from floor to ceiling. Grandfather's large armchair was back to the door, for I used to creep in and tickle his bald head over the back of his armchair. I would often pop in to see my Grandfather at work in his shop, but was usually chased out for getting in the way."

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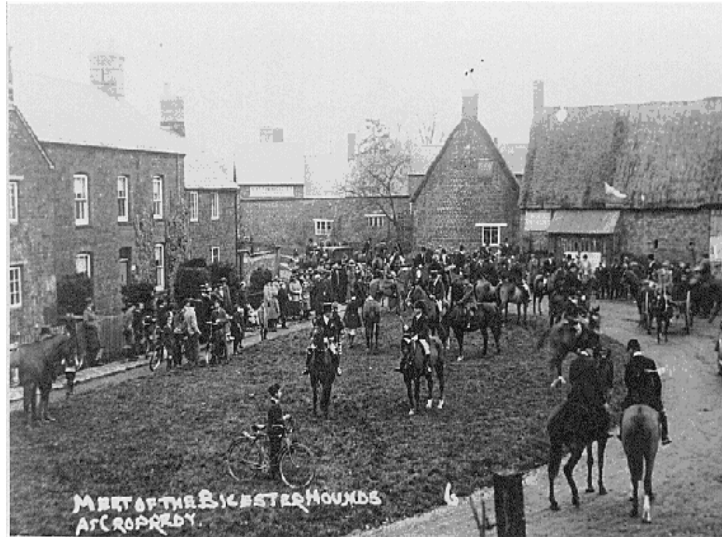
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## 2. School and Growing Up



5. Hunt 1900s.



6. Hunt c.1920.



7. Otter Hounds 1909

When I was a school girl, I started at three in the classroom. When I was five I was in Grade 1, in the big room, which had no partitions at that time. The stove was in the middle of the room, against the wall backing on Mill Lane. I was almost opposite the stove.

The cloakroom for the girls was next to the classroom. There was a wash basin in the corner, by the door that led to the School House and, if I remember correctly, the Pump was just the other side of the door, on the way to the School House. The boys cloakroom was the other end of the big room, at the Mill Lane end. The girls lavatories at the back.

On Mondays and Wednesdays the girls used the end of the room nearest the School House. We sewed and knitting socks all afternoon. At the other end the boys did drawing. I do remember maps on the walls and that we had Scripture class before the regular lessons. A few of course did not come in until 10 am. Mr Bonner took that class and I always enjoyed it. There was one Catholic girl, Louie Waddoups, who came in at 10, as also did the Sumners and my cousin Arthur Neal. Mother and I thought it was so silly, as we all were worshipping the same God, but I suppose that was their privilege.

Mr. Bonner taught all of us except Gladys. We liked them both very much. However when Mr Bonner used to call the register each morning, occasionally he would call out "Mary Ann Cooknell" meaning me, as she had left there when I started. I did not answer "Here" as supposed to and he got angry, yanked me out of my seat and put me in front. I said "But Sir my name is

not Mary Ann." He replied "You know I meant you." I told Mother and she said "People make mistakes but you were right in telling him why you did not answer." It happened a few times but I did not get punished.

The girls at school did not have a play area so we played in the street with boundaries of course. "Must not go beyond Bourton Bridge," and "Not beyond the Sowberge by the School House." I did however slip pass the Bourton bridge one day just for a lark and of course one of the girls had to tell on me. So that meant after school I had to stay behind and write out 500 times, "I must not go past the bridge." So I was late getting home.

I remember one day, when we were playing at the bottom of Mill Lane, a farmer came along with a bunch of cows. One ran after us and caught Elsie Cherry and tossed her up in the air. Luckily for her the horns ripped her dress and she fell, but she was badly bruised. We were all nervous of cows after that. Elsie was the eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Alban Cherry, who lived in the row of cottages on the left just before reaching the Brasenose Inn.

I must tell you how badly I behaved when in the classroom. I remember all that so perfectly. I had an awful urge when we were standing up singing, to punch the girl in front of me, in the back. This was so strong and stayed with me for years, even when I was in Church and grown up, I had the urge and even wondered what they would do if I did? Good thing I did not give way. I am thankful to this day that I had control over my wicked urge.

Mrs Bert Smith, then Miss Burbridge and Mr Bonner's niece, was the Infant's teacher. She often had me out in front and held me facing the crowd, so that they could see me in my discomfort, being tamed. After all I was very young and I hated that classroom.

My two older brothers, Tom and Will took me and I used to fight them on the way down, so they picked me up. One had my feet and the other the top part. We used to laugh about that later on in life. I certainly went through the mill with all those brothers, as I was eleven when Gladys was born. Grandma had Mary Ann living with her, so I was the only girl between five boys for a long time. I really hated boys for years after that. They were such torments and not too gentle at that. However we were all very close and good friends, but I had a rough time of it and Mother used to say, "It is a wonder your sister isn't bad tempered from your treatment." But they just laughed and said "We don't really hurt her."

My brothers teased me so much I know, but they also looked after me on the way to school and would not let anyone pester me. I was able, when I got older, to cope and we had some real fun. Many times after Tom and Will had transferred on the G.W.R. they would come to Cropredy, when I was in my later teens, and take me out. We used to go to Leamington and Warwick for a day and sometimes to Birmingham.

I remember as my brothers grew older and before they left to work on the railway, they used to sleep at Grandma's, as she had more room! We had a good life and good parents.



When Mother was extra busy she used to keep me home from school at times. Mr Bonner the Schoolmaster did not like it very much, but apparently it did not deter me at all, and believe it or not, but one year I did get a bronze medal for being "Never Absent Never Late" for one whole year! I don't think my brothers ever reached that goal, because one or other played truant often.

We used to have quite a lot of snow when I was very young. We had such fun on the Green making snow men and throwing snow balls. Some boys used to put stones in theirs and that was not too good, to get one of those thrown.

I had a wooden hoop. The boys were iron. I always had a doll until I was fourteen and skipping was also a favourite of mine and my girlfriends. My Aunt Mary French used to keep me in dolls and the last one she gave me was on my thirteenth birthday. A very pretty wax blond doll. Mother helped me dress it. I thought I was lucky.

As children we used to go into the hay-making fields and the farmer would let us ride back to their rickyards on the top of the loads of hay. We certainly had a nice time, but we had to behave or else? At sheep dipping time at Prescote we used to walk to Upper Prescote and watch the men dip the sheep in the river. They used a pole with something on the end and they would put the sheep in the water and push them up and down until they were clean, then they were put in a large enclosure by Aunt Mary French's house and when they were dry the men would shear them. That was interesting. My brothers and I were lucky as we could go in and have a nice dinner, when Aunt Mary called us. Then when it was time for us to go home for tea, Aunt would send us on our way.

We used to go out to pick blackberries and take a milk can to put them in, but I am afraid I ate most of what I picked and Mother said "How come you have so few?" So I said "I eat a lot!" At least I was honest about it. Anyway my brothers did not care much for them straight from the bushes, so they thought they were great, because they took more home than I. Several girls would gather wild flowers. Violets were plentiful and we would gather a lot, put them into small bunches and go round the village to the older people. Sometimes they would give us a penny, or a halfpenny, and sometimes we would get a cold piece of pudding. We were happy either way and I know they loved the violets.

On May day we used to go round the village with a large garland, we had made at school with primroses and whatever flowers were available. The evening before May 1st we went to the school and the teachers helped us. The big garland two boys carried. It had a long pole through the centre, each end protruding and off we went on May day. We stopped at all the houses and sang. They gave us money. One girl carried a can which was sealed, with a slit in the top. We went to Squire Loveday's at Williamscothe House and the cook always gave us milk to drink. The Squire gave us money. We also got as far as Cropredy Lawn, so we were very tired by the time we were through and the garlands were somewhat battered. We met at the school again and Mr Bonner counted the money and it was equally divided between those who went on this adventure ['The log book refers to a tea given to them all from the proceeds]. The little ones did not go.

We had school plays which I enjoyed. I was usually given the part of a Mother, but I got through. We also had different dances and songs which we had to rehearse many times before the actual evening. There used to be quite a crowd at the school to watch us. People from Great Bourton too. We had social evenings there, teas, dancing and school plays, admission sixpence.

We enjoyed dancing. We used to learn dancing at school and we would enjoy the socials so much. Later the ex-servicemen built a hall next to Lambert's Home Farm and they held dances, which did not sit well with some of the Chapel people who tried and failed to get the dances stopped. Mother could not agree with them, when some of them said the hall should be closed. She stated that there was nothing wrong with dancing. Mrs Hughes did not object to us dancing. Once a year a Fete was held in the field where Eriksens live, with all kinds of amusement stalls, roundabouts and things. Dancing was in the enclosure by the house. Admission was also sixpence. I did join the Band of Hope meetings at the Chapel School, when I was about twelve. I signed the pledge, but I broke it when I was eighteen. Lord North from Appletree came in the house with Dad and they were going to have a glass of port. I asked for some and I was so surprised when Dad found me a glass. That was my first so I broke the Pledge. I don't know what Uncle Will Neal would have said if he had known, but after I grew up I thought how silly for children to sign a pledge. They do not know what it is about until they are older.

I remember going to the Vicarage one evening each week. We were a group of girls called the "King's Messengers." It was twopence to join and we used to make little items, which were sold at Bazaars and the proceeds sent to missions abroad. Two German ladies used to take our class and we just loved them. They were paying guests at the Vicarage during Revd Maltby's reign. The Revd and Mrs Maltby were about the poorest who lived at the Vicarage in my time. They had many paying guests. The two Miss Johns I remember more than anybody who were paying guests, because we met at the Vicarage to make these articles for missionary work. Miss May Johns and Miss Dottie were two lovely ladies. I was not at any time overwhelmed with Mrs Maltby. The incident of my confirmation day is still vivid in my mind. My Aunt Mary French, who was my Godmother wished me to wear her daughter's veil and Mrs Maltby said "You can't wear THAT" and I was upset and told her to speak to my Aunt. She did and they got into an argument, but Aunt Mary won the battle. I was upset, as I could not stand arguments, even at thirteen.

During Revd Barr's time we used to have bazaars at the Vicarage with all types of stalls, and games. Teas were served. Dancing on the Vicarage lawn in the evenings, lit up by Chinese lanterns, which I thought was very elegant.

There were several boys in the Church choir, I remember, and several men. Mr Robert Smith, Mr Willie Smith, Archie Cave, Mr Tom Watts, Mr Albert Watts, Mr Harry Busby, Fred Busby, Arthur Busby, Horace Busby, Leonard Lambert and all my brothers, as they became old enough. There were others too, only I cannot recall their names. The ladies choir was organised by Miss Barr, but that was after I had left school. My sister was delighted, as Miss Barr was the choir master and the girls got to go to the Vicarage for rehearsals. Earlier, Mr Bonner played the organ and was also the choir master for many years. The church used to be filled with worshippers in those days and I remember on certain festivals they had to put up chairs in the

aisles. The people who lived in Prescote Manor and Squire Loveday's family used the Prescote Chapel. They did not sit in the main Church.

The Church ladies used to go to a meeting every Monday called "Mother's Meeting". The Vicar's wife would preside. They used to sew or knit for about two hours and the vicar's wife would read to them. Mother never went, she always liked to be at home and do her sewing there. Aunt Mary French joined and she belonged to the Mother's Union, which met once a month. I do not recall what the men did, or what the Chapel ladies did, but they must of had something.

I know Grandma used to make dresses. Aunt Mary French also did sewing for people, and Mother did plenty for all of us. My uniform, which was just a pin striped grey and white deal, we had to provide ourselves, when we went into service. Aunt Mary used to make mine. Mother bought the material and Aunt made mine for nothing, or love. She was my Godmother. Aunt Mary used to do a lot of sewing, after she moved to the village.

In the winter months as I recall, Whist Drives were held. I think in the school. Dad always went to those. He seemed to be very lucky at whist and usually won a prize of some sort. Mother never played cards and I did not think I played well enough to attend. My sister used to go when she was old enough.

I did not have any books from the Chapel Mary Smith library, mine were from the library in the Church Rooms, but they had nice selection. This was the Sunday School library. The teacher, downstairs in the boys room, usually gave out the books, and were chiefly for the school. I do not remember any other library except the Chapel one. The books I chose usually on the history of England and also New York. I was very interested in that. Mother would read them too, but she would buy books from Mr Francis, who came around each month, selling girls and boys magazines. Nice story books and other items. Mother used to buy quite a few from him, usually the New Testament for each of us for our birthdays, plus a birthday book for each. I also looked forward to the girls magazine every month. Mother only had to pay twopence for it and it was quite thick. Dad did not read much, only the newspaper, but Mother was well read and enjoyed a good book. She would purchase from Mr Francis if she thought it suitable and all his books were. I remember one Mother had it was "Lady Audrey's Secret" and Mother let me read it when I got older. It was a lovely love storey and as I have rather a romantic nature it suited me just fine.

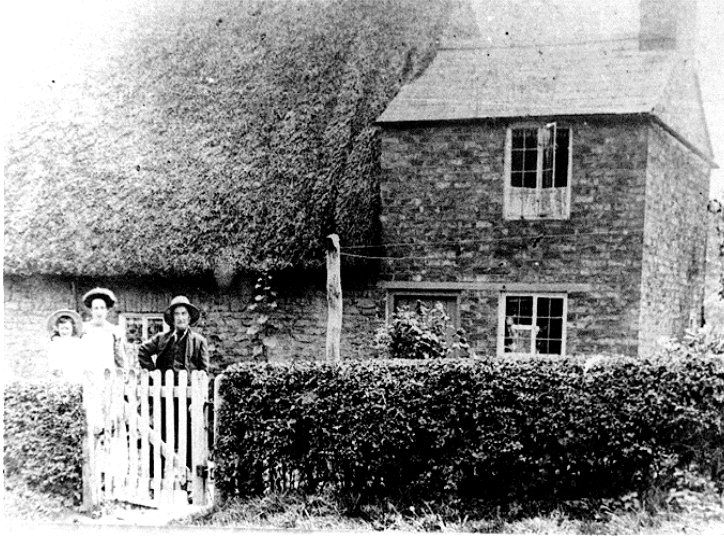
Mother was very special, everyone loved her including little children. She was so patient. I resented my brothers quite a lot, they teased me so much and I disliked it when they could go out and play after tea every day, and I had to stay in and do mending socks etc for two hours. At 7 p.m. I was allowed to go out to play until the curfew rang at 8 p.m. Definitely the girls did more than the boys. Mother was so patient with us and she understood when I expressed my views on boys when I was about fourteen. We never quarrelled after we grew up.

Mary Ann my eldest sister was brought up by Grandma. She looked after her when Thomas was born and then wanted to keep her. So Mother and Dad said yes, but we want to see her every day. Anyway I always thought she was a spoilt girl and she never had to earn a living. When she married C. Hickman Grandma asked Mother and Dad if they would let me go and take Mary Ann's place with them, as they were going to miss her. Mother said " We will see what Mabel has to say." When Mother asked me if I would like to go and live with Grandma I replied, "Live with them and be spoiled like Mary was, the answer is NO!" I was thirteen then and I was happy where I was.

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### 3. Relations



8. Mr. T. Cooknell Snr.  
with Mary Ann Cooknell  
& Laura Cherry



9. Mrs. Mary French



10. W.I. Jubilee Stall

The house Grandma Cooknell lived in belonged to her family, the Checkleys. Mother told me that the Checkleys came to Cropredy in 1848, when my Grandma was seven. They lived in the house by the Plantation and many years later the Taskers lived there. I only remember Mother saying that Thomas Checkley married my Grandfather Thomas Cooknell's sister Elizabeth, so I do not know if there were any more Checkleys in Grandma's generation. However, after many many years, Edgar and I used to go and visit Aunt Betsy, we called her that, on Saturdays and do odd jobs for her. She seemed always soaking her feet in mustard water. She had rheumatism very badly. This was after her husband died, as I do not recall him being there. They lived in the cottage by the Jitty entrance and facing Lambert's Home Farm, called now Fern Cottage.

I do however remember Thomas Checkley visiting Mother very often and he used to ask her if she had some VERY fat bacon. I used to think he was another Grandpa, as he had a white beard. My Grandma lived in the house by the Plantation for over seventy years, then after Grandpa died, she moved to the cottage in the corner of the Woodyard, that belonged to Lambert's. When we visited Cropredy I always went to see if there was anything I could do, and Grandma was always so pleased to see me. I also took her out in the old bath chair from the Vicarage. She became an invalid too early in life...and the Doctor said she had no disease. She died there in November 1925.

Mother's parents, Joseph and Maria Alexander, had five daughters and four sons. They lived at Brailes about fourteen miles from Cropredy. About once a year Dad used to hire Mr Bonham's horse and trap, which had a high seat for two in front and two at the back, with two or three children sitting on cushions on the floor. We were off to Brailes to visit Grandfather Alexander. I did not know Grandma Alex. She died before I was born. This was when we were kids. Later on we would again make visits there. This of course after my Alexander Grandparents passed on. I remember going by carrier's cart from Banbury once. I think I was six and Edgar was three at the time. I remember that perfectly. It was when my Brother Percy was a baby, that Grandma Alex had died.

Mrs French, Mother's older sister moved from Oathill to Upper Prescote and later moved into the village, to the house in Church Lane [Stonecote]. I know Aunt Mary French worked with Dr Bartlett for many years. She attended Mother with her babies. I think for most of us. She was very popular in the village. She delivered Mrs Robert Smith's three children, among many others. Aunt Mary was at Mrs Smith's when I left school, at not quite fourteen. Mrs Smith wanted me as Day -girl, to help her take the baby out.

My third name is also Alexander, but I only use it for legal matters. I was not baptised that name. Apparently Mother registered me and she added Alexander. Dad said he would not be Godfather if I had all those names. However I was registered as such and it is on my birth certificate, so I use it for legal and travel purposes.

I always visited all relatives, cousins and otherwise. My Brothers did not do that very much. There was a passage leading to the back of Aunt Ellen's in Chapel Row. There the Shoe shop was on the right at the end of the passage, and to the left the first house was where Mr George Pargeter, Shoemaker, and his daughter Grace lived, the second house was Aunt Ellen's. Uncle Will Neal had a very nice kitchen, an extra bedroom and a modern bathroom built at the rear. They had a comfy home. There was only one son Arthur and he was not allowed to play on the streets. Neals never liked the idea of Dad going to Church and bringing us up Church, but that was what he wanted. We used to go to a Chapel service occasionally. They used to jeer at us. Why I do not know. We all have rights in that direction.

The field called Cooknell's Dairy Ground, the first over the Railway bridge on the left [now part of the field to the south and minus the cattle hovel], was my Grandfather's and later became Uncle Steve's [Rented from Ankers of Beech House]. Dad



used to keep a couple of cows there for a time, after I grew up and was in London. Mother was very scared of cows and would not get near them.



Mr. & Mrs. T. Cooknell, 1931 and 1949.

There is, or was, a rickyard across from Bonham's that was Uncle Steve's coal yard. He raised his chickens there.

When Uncle Steve married Emily Hawkes they lived in the first house across the Jitty, opposite the Co-op. The front door facing the street [10 Red Lion Street]. I remember their wedding day and I sang "You are my Honeysuckle I am the Bee." Looking back I cannot think how I managed that, but I got quite an ovation. I must have been six or seven and Uncle Steve was happy and gave us rides around the room on his back. Later, when Emily was four and Harry a baby, Aunt Emily died. She died from Appendicitis and Uncle Steve was inconsolable. He gave up his home and went to live with Grandpa and Grandma again, at Plantation Cottage. Grandma was delighted, but she spoiled Harry terribly. Mother always said that Uncle should have hired a house keeper. My sister was then a baby. I used to take her out in the pram on Saturdays, and had to take Harry too. They were always fighting, as Harry was so spoiled and had been given in to, getting his own way. I was about twelve to thirteen and believe me, I gave him a few slaps. I got on well with him though, when he grew up, but he was always Grandma's pride and joy.

My brothers Tom, William, Percy and Edgar all worked on the railway and John at the Aluminium Plant on the way to Banbury. Neither one of them wanted Dad's business. Cyril Timms my cousin worked on the railway also until he retired. He was a guard on passenger trains as was my brother Percy in Leamington. Edgar was a wheel tapper. Tom and Will both became drivers. Will died in 1937 and Tom started in Wales and ended in Australia.

I do not remember very much about boys in my age group, where they worked. My Brother, Percy was stable boy at Williamscoote House, when a Mr Billington (not the Station Master) was groom, until he was qualified for the Railway. I think most of the girls did domestic work but after I left Prescote I did not keep track of the others. My sister Gladys used to look after Clifford Lambert when he was a baby until she was sixteen and then went off to Ascot as Miss Ellen Loveday's personal maid. Miss Loveday was Headmistress at St Georges School for young ladies, so my sister enjoyed being there. She used to play the piano when the young ladies wanted to dance and she got on so well with them. They gave her lots of gifts at times. Miss Loveday told Mother she would look after Gladys, as Mother thought she was too young to be away from home, but it all worked out just fine.

My eldest sister Mary Ann did not work away from home. She was with Grandma until she married Charles Hickman in 1909. I did watch all the weddings and also the baptisms. When the bell tolled the blinds were drawn. Dad was bearer to anyone who requested him and that was mostly for everyone.

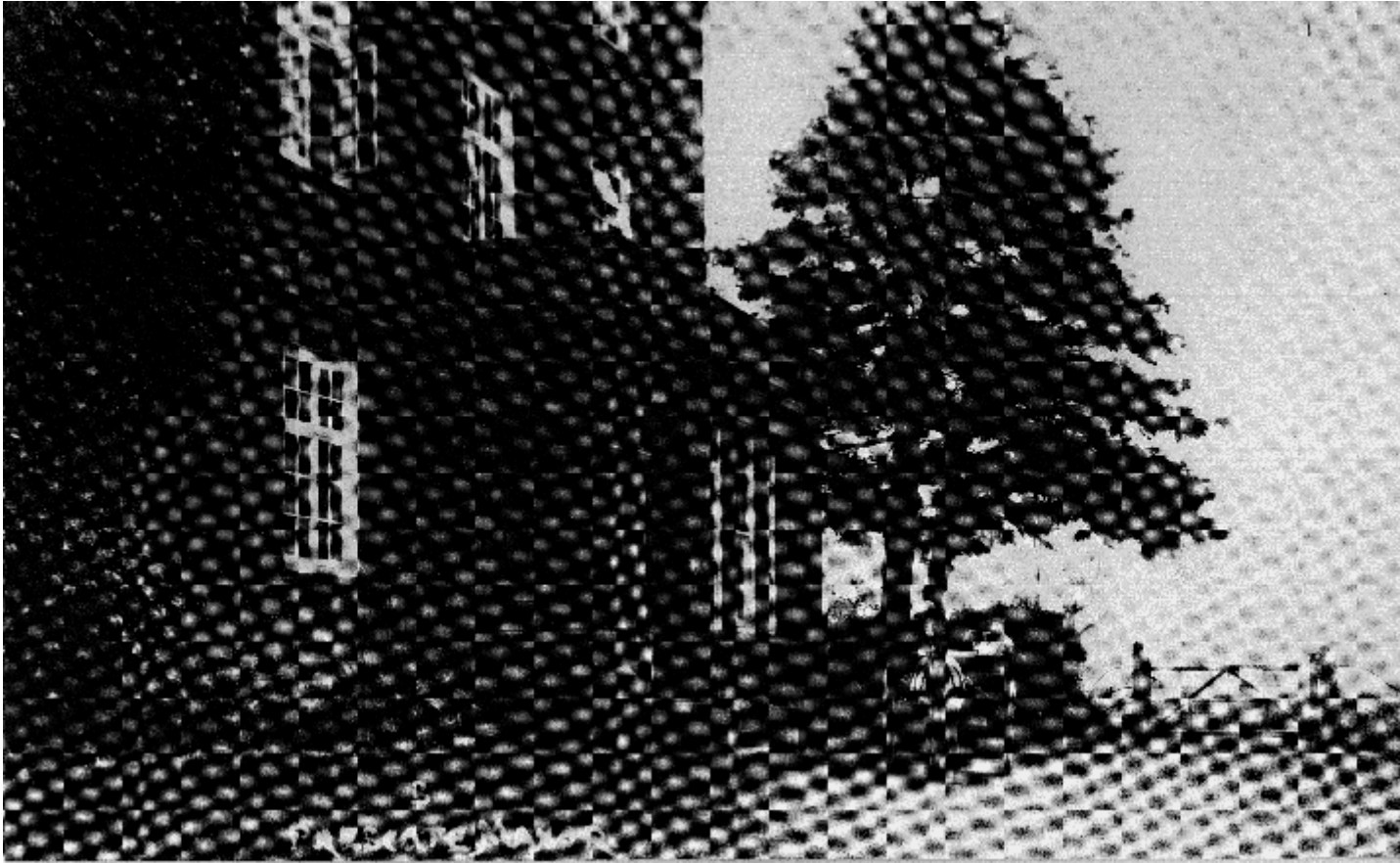
I think Gladys and my Brother Percy were the only ones married in Cropredy church, except Mary Ann and she was married in the chapel. Tom was married in Wrexham, north Wales. William in Woodford Halse, Northants. I was married in St. Phillip's church Kensington, London. Edgar in Pantyffynan, South Wales and John in Banbury. We did have a small get together, but nothing really elaborate. We did not want it and Mother was not too great for big deals. Mary Ann's was different, and Grandma just revelled in big feasts, but we as children enjoyed them as well.

The last time I saw snow was March the 3rd 1946, when I was at Cropredy for my parents Diamond Wedding Anniversary. We had quite a gathering. Mr and Mrs McDougall of Prescote called in after Church and brought a gold and silver teaspoon for Mother and Dad. They said it was from their set. This happy event was on a Sunday and Mother said they had snow on their Wedding day in 1886.

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## 4. Working



15. Prescote Manor c1918

I was with Mrs Smith for nearly two years and then she told me she could not afford to keep me on. I was paid 1/- [5p] per week for one year and then 1/3 [7p] for the rest of the time I was there. We had laughed about that through the years, when I visited her on my visits from London. Of course I had my breakfast there and dinner, so that was a help I suppose. Anyway I was upset when I left, as I was fond of Marjorie.

When I was fifteen, the Hughes lived at Prescote Manor and they needed a girl, to look after their baby girl of seven weeks. I applied and got the job, as I always liked babies. I did not however appreciate living in. I missed sleeping at home, but I got over it and stayed with them seven years. Mary Hughes was seven when I left and Freddie was three. He was born during

the first war. I was twenty two when I left and I wanted to go to London, as the cook at Prescote had left and gone there. She was ten years my senior, but we got on well together.

When I was at Prescote Manor, the cook and I always called in to see Mother and Dad on Sundays, after evening church. We always called out to Miss Timms, as she had gone to bed. I used to yell out "Good-night Miss Timms!" She would reply "Good-night Miss Mabel!" She told Mother she looked forward to that. This of course was after Mr Pargeter died, as when he was alive she had the little cottage between Bonham's and the Harris's, which she gave up when Mr Pargeter died and then lived permanently next to Mother, until she died. Mr and Mrs Alfred Pargeter occupied number one and they had their children there. Later when Mrs Pargeter died her sister, Miss Timms came and kept house for Mr Pargeter. All his children were grown up and married until the end. She had been a Lady's maid in the Peerage and had traveled with them extensively and had many earthquake experiences when in Italy. She was never afraid and was always such a good neighbour. When I was a school girl, Miss Timms used to let me wind her crochet cotton, which she bought in large skeins, on a very intriguing winder. I enjoyed that so much. She used to make exquisite bedspreads for the very rich and this kept her comfortably off until she died from cancer.

Prescote Manor farming. Each occupant classed themselves as Gentlemen farmers. In other words they were normally well off and supposedly farmed as a hobby? The cow sheds at the rear were altered when I was there and the milking machines were installed. I had to make out the labels and invoices in my spare time, when looking after the children.

The Gentlemen farmers used to hold shooting parties in turn. I remember those at Prescote Manor and they would all meet and have a marvelous dinner to wind up the day. I used to help Clara after the children were in bed, but I was not allowed to go in the dining area. The shooting party used to shoot rooks and would make pies of them, at least the maids did. I never wanted any though, I did not fancy eating black crows!

During the first World War, when Freddie was about one year, the owner of Prescote Manor came to the Manor for a days visit. She was Lady Wantage from Berkshire and was accompanied by two nieces. Lady Jane Grey and Lady Mary Lindsey, young ladies. Lady Wantage was elderly. This was a great day for Cropredy and the bells were rung in her honour. I think this was 1916. They came into the nursery to see Mary and Freddie and I thought they were very sweet. Lady Wantage asked me if I was going to devote my years with children, and I said " Yes, at least until I marry." Later apparently they started modernizing the cowsheds, so I assumed that is why her ladyship made a visit to discuss it with Mr Hughes. My Uncle William Neal got the contract. I was thrilled to meet a titled lady, but after I went to London I met a few more and found them all very nice and not at all snobbish.



21. Prescote Manor - 1910



22. Milking Sheds



23. Upper Yard

The Hughes had five children but I only had dealings with the two youngest, Mary and Freddie. Reggie, Cyril and Irene. Irene who was a terror, used to kick me at times on my shins and believe me that hurt. Dad went up and spoke to Mrs Hughes and told her what bruises I had on my legs. I was then fifteen or sixteen. One day I had to take her out with me up to the village. Mary was then a baby. We happened to encounter Miss Anker and Irene stuck out her tongue at her. Miss Anker blamed me and told Mrs Hughes, I had told the imp to stick out her tongue. I was furious and told Dad about it. He went to Miss Anker and told her Irene was not my charge and that I was not responsible for what she did. And to think I was at the Manor for seven years.

The Grange at Fenny Compton was the family residence of Mrs Hughes. I went there several times with Mrs Hughes, Mary and Freddie in the horse and buggy days.

At Prescote Manor the walls in the drawing room and large hall are made from beautifully carved oak. I think there are about [?] twenty six rooms including the attics. It is a beautiful spacious home and there is, or was, a spiral stone staircase, leading up to the maids rooms. Also a wide staircase of four flights, which takes us to the family rooms and the two flights up to the maids rooms. Another rather steep staircase, facing the front lawn, takes us up to the guest rooms and from there some stone stairs leading to six more rooms with cement floors. Mrs Tame came to Prescote every Monday and washed the laundry all day and on Fridays she cleaned the flues in the kitchen and scrubbed floors. What a hard life. I felt sorry for her, but she did not seem to mind. It earned her a few shillings. Her husband was shepherd for Mr Hughes.



Before the Hughes time the Waytes lived there and they had four girls and one boy. My Uncle John French was carter and he and Aunt Mary lived at Upper Prescote. As children we had treats at the Manor with races from one drive gate to the other and all kinds of games especially for the Church kids. The daughters Louise, Dorothy, Ethel and Mabel used to enjoy it with us. They used to teach us in Sunday school. We then were served with a delightful tea in the dining room.

There used to be a back entrance to Prescote Manor which led to the courtyard where the stables were and also into the field. The front drive had a large black gate which led to the front door and just past that another gate leading into the field. Just before reaching this gate we turned left, went through a door with the stables on the right, and to the left, the rear of the Manor. A very imposing place. We were not allowed to use the indoor bathroom and toilet, which was in the wing opposite the river and bridge. Clara and I had a bungalow bath and we used to carry up the water to Clara's room, at the top of the house, and it all had to be carried down. What a performance. I was happy when I went to London and was able to use the proper bath and toilet. I never wanted to live permanently in the country after that.

Mr Jack Prew used to date Clara, but I do not think he ever wanted to marry her. That being the case she would have snapped him up at once. From what I saw Clara was as anxious to marry and hinted to each village man that took her out, including my brother William. He only dated her once. He was so surprised when she talked of marriage. Poor Clara she never did marry and she had so many boy friends including a man from Banbury, Dad introduced her to. He took her out a few times and then wearied of her. In fact he said to Clara one Sunday, "Let me take Mabel out and you go to Church," but I stepped in and said "No thank you, I will go to Church." I did that for Clara. We were supposed to attend Church and then tell Mrs Hughes what the sermon was about, so I used to tell Clara some parts of it and she would make believe she had been in Church. I was very carefree and I did not mind Mrs Hughes knowing if I did not go to Church, even if she read the riot act to me!

Mrs Hughes was talked to by the Relieving Officer asking why Mary was not in school anywhere, as Mary was over five. So Mrs Hughes said she was being taught at home by herself. So that passed alright, except for the fact that Mrs Hughes had ME giving Mary her first lessons, for two hours each morning. Mrs Hughes chose the subjects from the three R's to Geography, History etc. This I did for almost two years, until I left in May 1918, and all this, plus taking care of Mary and Freddie, for the sum of ten shillings [50p] per month and of course food. I only went to see them once after I left. Mary and Freddie were so upset I felt I could not go through that again. They did not like their new Nanny. Apparently she always made them walk in front of her, when they were out and she never made up stories for them like I did. Sometimes Annie would call in Mother's with Freddie and Mary. Annie was from Brailes and Mother knew her parents. She told Mother that she did not like children, so I wondered why she ever took on the job in the first place. Anyway she was not with them very long. She would not allow Mother to give them a little cake and they always enjoyed that, when I took them in, which was almost every day, for half an hour. Mrs Hughes never minded me doing that.



I would like to mention about when the floods were out, when I lived at Prescote. I used to take Freddie Hughes on the ice in his pram. I could not skate well, but I got along well enough pushing the pram. I felt I had security. We also had fun when the canal froze over.

There used to be a stile just past the lock on the towpath, or rather at the side. This we had to use when the floods were out and there was a board walk, after we got over the stile, a narrow plank about two feet off the ground and a white hand rail on the left, which ended at the back drive just before reaching the kitchen garden wall. Once, Clara and I, after going to Church then went to see Mother and Dad for an hour or two, it had been pouring with rain all evening, but we did not think the floods would be there, however when we got to the gate just past the canal bridge, we could see the driveway was flooded. So we got onto the canal path and then over the stile and onto the plank. It was a terrifying experience. The water was over the plank and we had to shuffle along. We dare not pick our feet up in case we missed the plank, so it took us a long time to get to the end. I was very nervous and to make matters worse the handrail in places was very rickety. However, thank god, it was by now a moonlit night and we got to the end without anything worse than getting wet feet. We had to use the back drive to get to the Manor. Mrs Hughes was angry, because we were so late, but of course she understood after she saw our condition. It was a very tense time. The back drive was used mostly by the farm wagons and the milk carts taking the milk to the station morning and evenings.

I remember the roads, heaps of rocks were dropped from a cart, at intervals along the grass, by the roads. Labourers used to use heavy mallets and break these into gravel. This was spread on the roads and when enough was ready, the steam roller came along and rolled the gravel into the roads. We kids used to watch them, but we had to keep our distance.

After I grew up I had this urge to go to London and from then on I always liked large cities. So many people to watch. When I am out now, I find People Watching is a very interesting past time.

When I left for London, I was a companion to a Lady. She was 84 and an aristocrat. I was with her for over two years. She was almost blind, so my duties were many. I had to take her to church by tramcar to Lewisham, and also read to her daily, both from the Bible and the newspaper. She was most kind to me, but I got restless and wanted to get back with children. I then took a position with a Doctor and his wife as children's nanny to their little boy in Kensington. I enjoyed that and I used to see Clara the Cook on my days off, so I was alright. I was with them for four years, until I was married.

I told you about Mother's engagement, how about mine. This took place in St. Philips Church in Kensington. One Sunday morning, and I thought that was ideal, my husband-to-be went to Church with me and during the sermon he slipped the ring on my finger. I was surprised, but very happy. No-one else saw, I played it cool!

[On the 31st of March 1923 Mabel Kate Cooknell married Cedric White of London. They had one daughter, Pamela Mary. Cedric served twelve years in the Royal Navy before he died, on the 17th of February 1926, aged only 29. Mabel was to stay on in London. During their short marriage she had taken Pamela home to Cropredy on visits.]

Dad was given the option of renting Miss Timm's cottage, after she died, for at that time I was just widowed at 29, and in London. Dad wrote and asked me to come and take it, but I declined as I wanted to make it on my own, and I liked London. So the next tenants were Mr and Mrs Dunn from the Lawn. Ivy Cherry's parents. After the Dunns a young couple had it. Mother missed Mrs Dunn very much, but Ivy Cherry came over to Mother's every morning and brought tea at eleven. There was a good door in their wall, which we called the pump door, where we went for our water each day, and we could keep it fastened on our side if we so desired.

[Mabel was to marry again. On the 22nd of February 1929 she married Horace Neville Durrant of London in Montreal. After a while they moved from Canada to the United States and remained there until 1937, when they returned to England. Mr Durrant died on the 1st of September 1948 and for seven years Mabel stayed in London. It was during this time that her Mother, a widow since 1946 went to spend a few weeks with her].

On her last visit she was 93 and enjoyed my taking her out to places of interest. She always loved her home, but spent towards the end a lot of time with Gladys in Slough. She died there in 1956 aged 94.

[Mabel went out to live with her daughter, husband and their five children. She felt very much welcomed by them, and has remained there ever since. A little of her life there crept into her letters].

I wish we weren't so many miles away (6,000). It seems as we get older we long for our native England so much, but the climate here suits me so admirably, and in the 27 years [written in 1984] I have not had one bronchial attack that I suffered during the cold damp winters in England. The summers are hot, but I enjoy it and walk out even at high temperatures such as 113 degrees. The sun is so good for my back, in fact it rejuvenates me. I haven't been to a Doctor since 1975, they are so expensive. My daughter, now a widow, and I are vegetarians and we drink a lot of herbal teas. I feel fine on them and my daughter is very healthy, so we have a lot to be thankful for.

[March 3rd 1984] To-day I have done my three miles walk [aged 88]. One and a half to my favorite shopping mall and of course one and a half back, also browsing in a lot of stores. Then I have lunch and chat for a while with a lovely friend, who is in her late 40's...then I am ready for my walk home...I am busy with something all the time.

Thank-goodness for automatic washers and vacuum cleaners, as I do the laundry twice a week for my daughter and self, and also vacuum all through the house, three bedrooms, two bathrooms, kitchen and dining room, plus sitting room. I manage O.K. and enjoy it. I also do the cooking. The menus I plan in bed when I can't get to sleep.

England is so beautiful...my daughter loves Cropredy so much. She was born in London, but she tells me I am lucky to be a native of Cropredy.

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## 5. A Walk Round the Village of Cropredy



16. Cropredy Station 1908

Starting at Eriksen's house at School Farm, Mill Lane. Mr and Mrs Stevens lived there for years, later they moved up to the end cottage, in a row on the left, coming up from the school. Mrs Stevens used to make pats of treacle toffee and we used to buy from her at 2d per four inch pat, or about that size. It was delicious.

The School House and School. Mr and Mrs Bonner were there for about twenty six years, then Mr Bonner died from cancer.

Cropredy Railway Station: What happy memories this brings back to me. One in particular, during the spring and summer months, when we were school children. Mother used to let us go down to the Station on Sundays, after Sunday School and Church, to see the baskets of homing pigeons being released by the Station master. They came from Leamington, or near, on

the 12.30 train and we were allowed on the platform to see them let loose. Then they would fly around until they got their bearings and head for their home again. This was fun. Mr Miller was Station master at that time and he would say, "Now off you go home for your dinner."

The house at the bottom of the Station road, I think, was occupied by two ladies. I think their name was Ward. They were related to the Wards who lived in the first house on the opposite side. Elsie Ward was around my age and we were pals at school and Sunday school. Next to them lived Mr Harry Williams and his two sisters. I did not remember their parents, it seemed they had passed on before I knew them. Next to the Williams was Mr and Mrs George Pettifer and their brood: Charles, George, Flossie, Ernest, Harold and Lily. We were all friends at school and otherwise. Then there was the Prew family. Mr and Mrs Jack Prew and several others I cannot recall their names.

The house on the left with the letter box in the wall was occupied by Mr and Mrs Watkins. Mrs Kate Watkins nee Smith was a teacher at the school until she married. Sister to Mr Robert and Mr Willie Smith.

At the Manor farm, when I was a school kid, lived Mr and Mrs John Griswold. I think they had two or three girls, older than I, but I did know them to speak to. They later moved to Wardington and Mrs Francis, a widow lived at the Manor farm. She had a maid, Annie Upton from Great Bourton and when I was living at Prescote Manor, I sometimes had to take Mary and Freddie to see this lady for a few minutes, then I would stay and talk to the maid for a while and she used to make some delightful curried lamb and give me some.

Across the street the row of stone cottages that stand back, I cannot recall everybody who lived there, but I do remember the Parsons family quite well. Mr and Mrs John Cowley and the Stevens family who moved from the house where the Eriksens lived.

Then the houses close to the pavement [Copes Cottages]. Mr and Mrs Harry Pettifer, but no children. Mr Paxton. Mr and Mrs Alban Cherry and their large brood. Mrs Joyce Allitt and her daughter Susan. Doctor Bartlett rented one of their rooms for a surgery for many years. That was when he lived in Wardington. He later moved to the large Townsend House, Poplar Farm, where you went through a door in the wall. Doctor Bartlett made up medicines for us, at least he did before I left home. If anyone had an accident, usually a pony and cart was hired from Mr Bonham, and often Dad, or someone else would take the injured to hospital, or they would go on the train, if not badly injured. People often went on the train to visit at Banbury hospital. I was in the Radcliffe in Oxford when I was seventeen for an appendix operation, and my brother Percy and Charlie Hickman visited me by train. When I was at Mrs Hughes I used to walk across the fields, if I had to see the Doctor, or perhaps pick up medicine for the Hughes family.

The last house in this row lived Mrs Jane Pettifer and her son Tom. When she died Mother often used to make him a pudding and take it down to him. She maybe thought he did not do much for himself. He always seemed to be so lonesome.

Plantation House was of course my Grandparent's, with the stable and loft. I slept in that house many times. Next door there were more Pettifers. Opposite to them was Auntie Elizabeth and Uncle Tom Timms plus Cyril my cousin. He was two months older than I. Then later they moved to Chapel Green. Next to them lived Mrs Barnett a widow and in the next house Mr and Mrs Ernest Cherry and their daughter Laura.

The Brasenose Inn: Mr and Mrs Cummings and three daughters. One worked away, Elsie taught at school until she married and Lily taught in the Sunday school class. Usually she would read us fairy stories. She took the afternoon session. We went to Sunday school in the morning at 10am and then on to Church for the morning service. Then after dinner we went to Sunday school again from two to four. We did not go to evening service until we left school, but we used to go upstairs in Mother's room and watch and count the people who went by on the Green. Those we knew went to Chapel and the others to Church. This was quite a pastime. Also we would lay in bed and count all the inhabitants in Cropredy. In those days it was around 435 or so.

In the next house to the Inn [Constone] lived the Station master Mr Billington, wife and daughter Elsie, who went to school on and of£ She was delicate. Later on just after I left school they moved and Mr and Mrs Miller and their two daughters Daisy and Phylis came. He was the Station master for years. The blacksmith was just past his place and on the left there was a basket weaver's shop. Mr Gilbert's shop was up a grass slope next to the barn. The door was not level with the barn and it faced the Brasenose Inn. We children were allowed to watch Mr Gilbert at work. He sold his baskets from his workshop. I do not remember the Ozier bed opposite the school except that it was there, but I do remember the one on the Williamscode Road. We did not have time off from school, but Aunt Mary had me with her on a Saturday. She used to take me with her and I helped strip the osiers. There were a few gadgets there, I remember we put the osiers in one at a time in the slit at the top and then pull. This was to strip them. Mr Gilbert and his wife and three daughters lived in the house that Bill Harris lives in on the north side of the Green. The three girls were my special friends and I missed them when they moved to Coventry, just before I left school. I missed them so much. Mother and Mrs Gilbert were good friends for years. The blacksmiths were Andrew Taylor and his help Sidney Watts. Andrew used to lodge with Aunt Ellen Neal, until he and Sidney left for Canada.

On the right of the Green lived Mr and Mrs Golby at the first house. Major Slack at the next. Later Mr Selby and his daughter Ada lived there, and later still Miss Mary Lambert. Three other Selby daughters had positions away, but their governess lived at Cropredy with them. Major Slack was a wealthy bachelor [see Appendix 2], and he used to give parties for the village children very often. We used to have all kinds of games and each child received a gift. He had a housekeeper and she was a friend of Mother's. When Major Slack was ill he always wanted Dad to go and sit with him. Dad was with him when the Major died. It seemed to be the usual thing for Dad to do, as he was awakened very often by someone in the village who needed the Doctor. Major Slack's house faced the coronation tree on the Green and was on the left of where we lived.

The Selbys used to be in good circumstances. Their ex-governess Miss Tew taught the piano and she had a private school for better off people like the Hughes family. They were tutored by Miss Tew, until they were old enough to be whipped off to



boarding schools. I do not know why Mary Hughes did not go to Miss Tew's. Mary was seven when I left them so she had to go somewhere to school. Her two older brothers and sister went to Miss Tew's and then when they were about nine or ten they were sent to boarding school. I cannot remember when Miss Tew retired, as I left the village, but on my visits home I usually saw Miss Tew and the Selbys. In fact Miss Ada Selby was often in Mother's chatting. She was very interesting I thought. Later the Selbys had to get out and their furniture was stored in Anker's barn. We all helped to carry some up there and Grandma took them into Plantation cottage. Believe me it was crowded, but they managed, and then they moved to the house on Red Lion Street, where they each died. My sister Gladys had four years tuition with Miss Tew at the piano. Dad paid for one quarters lessons for me but I got tired of it, as at nineteen I did not want to spend all my spare time practicing. Anyway I could not afford it. My sister does not play the piano any more, in fact she gave it to our nephew Gordon, when they went to Australia in 1969/70. Our brother Percy bought the piano during World War 1, when he was on leave from France, so Gladys thought Gordon should have it, and have his children taught music.

Prior to that we used to have sing songs at home and ask one or two neighbours in. At other times, we used to go over to Mrs Harris's and have singing there. I forget who played their piano, but we had enjoyable times. Aunt Ellen Neal also had people in, but I was not too keen on her musical evenings. It was an organ and only hymns were allowed to be played, Sundays and Weekdays. We weren't allowed songs on Sunday, during the week yes, so we were happy with our arrangement. Mother just loved music. She had a nephew who used to sing. He lived in Banbury and used to get a lot of engagements to sing at weddings. He had two others in with him. I forget what instruments they played.

At Cherry's at that time were Mr and Mrs Thomas Cherry and their family. I remember them all quite well. Across from them Dad's shoe shop, then the Harris family, who later had the post office there. Next to them was Miss Timms and then when she moved next to Mother, a Mrs Jakeman, a widow from Claydon, lived there until she died. Then next to her was PC.Havell and family and later the Bonhams.

All this of course is when I was at school. Years before I was born Mother spoke of an acrobatic family who had lived in Bonham's house. I think their name was Leglare. Anyway Mother said they were very nice people and after they left a Mr Borton lived there. He was a jeweller and used to do a lot for the school children like giving prizes and gifts. He used to visit the school I remember. Later he drowned in Clattercote pool. He had been warned not to go skating, but took no notice and the ice broke and he went down. Dad was one of the men who went dragging for his body.

The Cup and Saucer field we used to play in.

Now we come round to the Woodyard. Before Grandma moved there Mr and Mrs Waddoups and two daughters lived at Woodview cottage. Later they moved to Red Lion Street near Mr Edward Gardiner. Then Grandma moved to the top of the Woodyard. Mr and Mrs R. Sumner and they had Frank, Annie and Elsie. I liked them. They lived in the first house in the

Woodyard and then later had a house built opposite Lambert's Home Farm. It was at the back of the first house in Red Lion Street.

In Church Lane was Mr W Godson the baker. Next to the Bakery was the Church Rooms and the library, where I got my books.

Mr and Mrs Harris and their two little boys had at that time lived in the house that was Aunt Mary's [Stonecote]. Mr Harris was the vicar's coachman, for the Revd Greenham. The Harris family moved onto the Green and Aunt Mary and Uncle Jack moved to Church Lane from Upper Prescote, where Uncle was carter for the Wayte family.

Next was the lovely old Vicarage and across the Lane a door in the wall led into the beautiful kitchen garden. The Vicar would allow people after church on Sunday, in the spring and summer, to walk through and enjoy the beauty of the flowers. Of course in those days we children were not allowed to race around. We had to walk sedately with our parents. Also we never played with toys on Sundays and NEVER NEVER sewed, knitted or crocheted on Sundays, but they were good old days compared with what we do now.

Beside the kitchen garden lived Mr and Mrs Bayliss, then Mr and Mrs Timms (the brother to Mr Thomas who married my Aunt Elizabeth). I cannot recall who lived in the end house. I think it changed tenants so often until my sister Mary Ann and her husband moved there when I was about 13. I did not go in there very much. I used to choose the time to visit my sister.

In the big house on the left going up High Street lived the well off Ankers. I remember Miss Anker so well and her paid companion. They also kept a maid. Dad got on alright with her as he used to make her shoes. She would never buy scrappy made store shoes. After Miss Anker died a Mr Hammond lived there and raised poultry, but I did not know him to talk to for I was living in London by then.

Mr and Mrs Louis Lambert and Mr Jack Lambert lived in the cottage almost opposite the Ankers. Mr Louis was the sexton at the church and he always rang the Curfew bell. He was a hard worker and well liked. In the row of cottages on the left going up the High Street, I cannot recall who was in the first [Arthur Pettifer's parents]. In the second was Mr and Mrs Tom Busby and children, then Mr Lucius Goodman and his daughter Kate. He only had one leg. Next to them lived Mr and Mrs Albert Watts and six children who later moved to Station Road Cottages. Next to them I think was Joshua Townsend but I am not sure. The end house Pettiphers.

The larger house across Newscut Lane was Mr Griffin's. Fairly well off. His daughter, a widow, and her two daughters Kate and Elsie were living there. Dad also sat with Mr Griffin when he was dying.

The next large house [Poplar Farm now Eagles] was Mr Henry Townsend's and later the Doctor's residence and surgery. Dr. Bartlett was the doctor at that time and he lived in Wardington. That is why Dad usually went to get him. After Dr. Bartlett died (after I had left the village) a Dr. Morton came and he was there for years. Mother used to call him Dr. Sunshine. He was so nice to her when she was ill. I went from London to look after her. I thought he was really nice.

Chapel Row: I cannot recall all the people, but I do remember Mr John Smith's Post Office, which was I think in the third house from the chapel. I rarely went inside for there was a small wooden door in the window, instead of glass. When this was closed we just tapped on it and Mr Smith would open it and say "How many stamps?" I am not certain about this, but I think the letter box was in the wall below the window. Regarding telegrams they were sent from the railway station from the signal box, where Uncle Tom Timms worked for over forty years.

Also in Chapel Row were Mr and Mrs Thomas Watts, Mrs Sally Adkins, Mrs Richard Busby and her several children, then the passage entrance in which there was a door just inside on the right and that led into a very small house. There was a young blind girl living there. I think her name was Annie. Through the passage and turn left were the Pargeters as I mentioned before. Then came Aunt Ellen Neal's back door.

Monkeytree House where a Miss Brand lived for years. She was Revd Brand's sister. She was fairly well off and did not mingle much. She would go to church every Sunday elegantly dressed with a long train. Miss Brand usually came into church when the Tommy Tinker bell was ringing and that was the last before the service started. She would walk so gracefully down the church always in black and her hands in a muff She seemed to glide down the aisle with her train swishing and then sat in the far side under where the old armour was on the wall [north aisle]. I used to be fascinated by her, but she never spoke to anyone. I do not think she mixed with anyone, but she was nice to me when I delivered her shoes to her and asked me in, but I felt very shy of her. She kept a maid. I do not quite remember the Revd Brand ,although at times I have a faint recollection of him.

The cottages opposite Monkeytree House [Poplar Cottages] I can remember a Mr and Mrs Tagg who lived in the first. I did not really come in contact with any of them, but the next three cottages on the left, I knew well [The Hollies, once Old Yard]. The first on the left lived Mr and Mrs Albert Shirley and their son Colin. In the middle one, Mr and Mrs Thomas Hawkes and daughter Doris and in the third was Mr and Mrs Wm.Hawkes, parents of Thomas and their daughter Emily who married my Uncle Stephen Cooknell. They had a grand-daughter living with them. She went to school about the time I did, and her name was Ivy Yates.

Down Creampot Lane [past R.Kings and Wam Pettiphers] in the second row near the pavement, I can recall the King family. I remember very clearly the night Mr George King returned from the Boer War, I think I was six or seven. Dad and several other men borrowed a gig without the horses, and met Mr King at Cropredy Station, who arrived on the last train, about 8 p.m. They had a torch light procession and the men pulled him through the village via the Green. Mother was on the Green

with Edgar and myself. I thought it was just wonderful to see a torch light procession. Mr King was the blacksmith and his business was close to the wharf by the canal. He used to let us watch him at work as long as we behaved. The King family used to play their hand bells at different functions. We thought they were superb.

There was also a Wesleyan brass band. Mr George Neal who was Uncle Will Neal's brother played. I thought it was good, but have no idea where or when they practised.

Dad's helper Mr William Shirley lived beyond the Kings at the end of that row. In the two cottages just past him lived Mr and Mrs John Shirley, wheelwright, and Mr and Mrs Wells who had a daughter Olive.

The last house, Andrews Farm, was occupied by Mr and Mrs James Pargeter and children. The son of Mr Alfred Pargeter who lived next to us.

Starting from the Chapel on Lambert's side. The house on the left [now the Post Office] was occupied by Mr and Mrs Gardiner and their only child Florrie, who was one of my greatest friends. She later married and lived in Warwick opposite my Brother Percy, so when I visited my Brother I used to drop in and see Florrie and her two boys.

Next to them is Lambert's House, Home Farm. The house that Mr John Allitt had was at the rear of the present Lambert's house. I remember going to Allitt's auction sale with Mother. Later I think the old house was partly demolished and Mr Lambert had the present house built in the front near the street, during or just after the First World War. Mr J.W.Lambert remarried. His second wife worked at Squire Lovedays. I remember seeing them out for a walk when he was dating her. I used to see them together when I was walking down from Prescote Manor, they were always very pleasant and would stop and talk to me. They married and had one son. My sister used to take him out, when she left school, until she was 16, and she just loved him. Later when she married and had a son, she named him Clifford. Her son is now in Tasmania and has four children.

Past this house, towards the Jitty, was Aunt Betsy's and next to this a lovely old cottage with loads of gorgeous flowers in the garden. Here lived Mr and Mrs Richard Watts and their two children, Ethel and Tom. Tom was drowned in the First War. Very sad.

Going down the Jitty, Mrs Legg lived in one of the houses, Mrs Bill Harris's Grandma. The house, later facing New Place, was occupied by Mr and Mrs Elkington. Still going down the Jitty the first house on the left [behind 10 Red Lion Street] was Mr and Mrs Bernard Pargeter and the next Mr and Mrs Grubb. Mr Bernard Pargeter was the hair cutter and shaver at Mr Bonham's saddlery, on the Green, where Mr Pargeter the saddler worked. I think the girls relied on their Mother's to trim theirs. Mother used to trim mine at times. I don't think we went to a hairdressers until I was married, and then I had mine bobbed in London. I had such a lot, it was long and thick and done in a bun. My hats used to press on the hair pins and give

me headaches, so I suddenly made up my mind the hair had to come off and I am glad I did. This did not sit well with Dad, but he got used to it. Mother was acceptable to change, but we had some laughs about it.

At the end of the Jitty the first house on the left in Red Lion Street, is where my Uncle Steve, Aunt Emily and the two children lived, for about six years. When Aunt died my Uncle took the children and went back to live with Grandma. At the next house lived Mr and Mrs Alfred Smith, Father and Mum of Robert Smith. Next to them lived their son William and his wife and two children.

Turning up the street from the Jitty. First, the Co-op shop managed by Mr Ted Taylor. Then the Red Lion Inn, landlords the Hadlands. Next Mr Newitt and daughter Edith and then Mr and Mrs Cave. Mr Cave was blind. They had a sweet shop and a few groceries. It was very small but a landmark for us when we had a penny or two to squander. Next was Mrs Dumbleton then Mr and Mrs James Bonham, Hilda and Harold. After Mrs Bonham died they moved onto the Green. Later Mr Bonham married Flossie Golby who worked at Bourton House and they had several children. Hilda went to school at the same time as I did. She died fairly young. Harold won several scholarships and eventually became a Headmaster at a boys school. The next house [number 2] Mr and Mrs Gardiner and at the end the Plumb family, after Hannah Smith(?). She used to talk to me when I went to see if Hilda was coming out.

At the bottom of Red Lion Street was the Lock House where Mr and Mrs Pratt and their two sons Ted and Tom lived. Later when the boys married Ted lived in Williamscoote and Tom lived in Fern Cottage. He was in my school days the Truant Officer.

The three cottages on the right over the canal bridge, Mr Jack Tame had one. He worked for Prescote Manor. I cannot remember who occupied the other two, at least not when I was a schoolgirl. I knew who lived there later, when I worked at the manor, Mr and Mrs Bennett, Mrs Legg and a lady who lived in the third during the war only. At the two houses at Upper Prescote one was my Aunt and Uncle French in one and Mr and Mrs Wells and their brood in the other. These were quite spacious and more suited to larger families.

Now I am back in the village going Round Bottom. On the right was Mr Robert Smith's Woodyard and buildings and then their residence. Their two garden doors led into Hell Hole, or "Hello."

Then across from them were the Lambert's at the Wharf. They also had two doors in the wall. One for the back entrance and the other the front. This house was in the coal wharf and across from their wharf was the stone wharf. We used to play in there quite a lot and watch the barges unload. Occasionally the boat people would give us a ride as far as the lock. It was all so interesting. At the back of the stone wharf was Mr George King's blacksmith's shop. We used to watch them a lot, so even when we were village kids we had a very full and exciting life, I thought. I think taking everything into consideration that we all had a very nice childhood, even though we lived in a small community, we seemed happy and could always find something to amuse us.

Over the canal bridge in the house on the left lived Mr and Mrs Amos and their sons. I used to love Mrs Amos, she was such a nice lady. This brings us to the end of the village.

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## 6. Cropredy Green



17. Cropredy Green c1906



18. Plantation Cottages



19. Plantation Road c1910

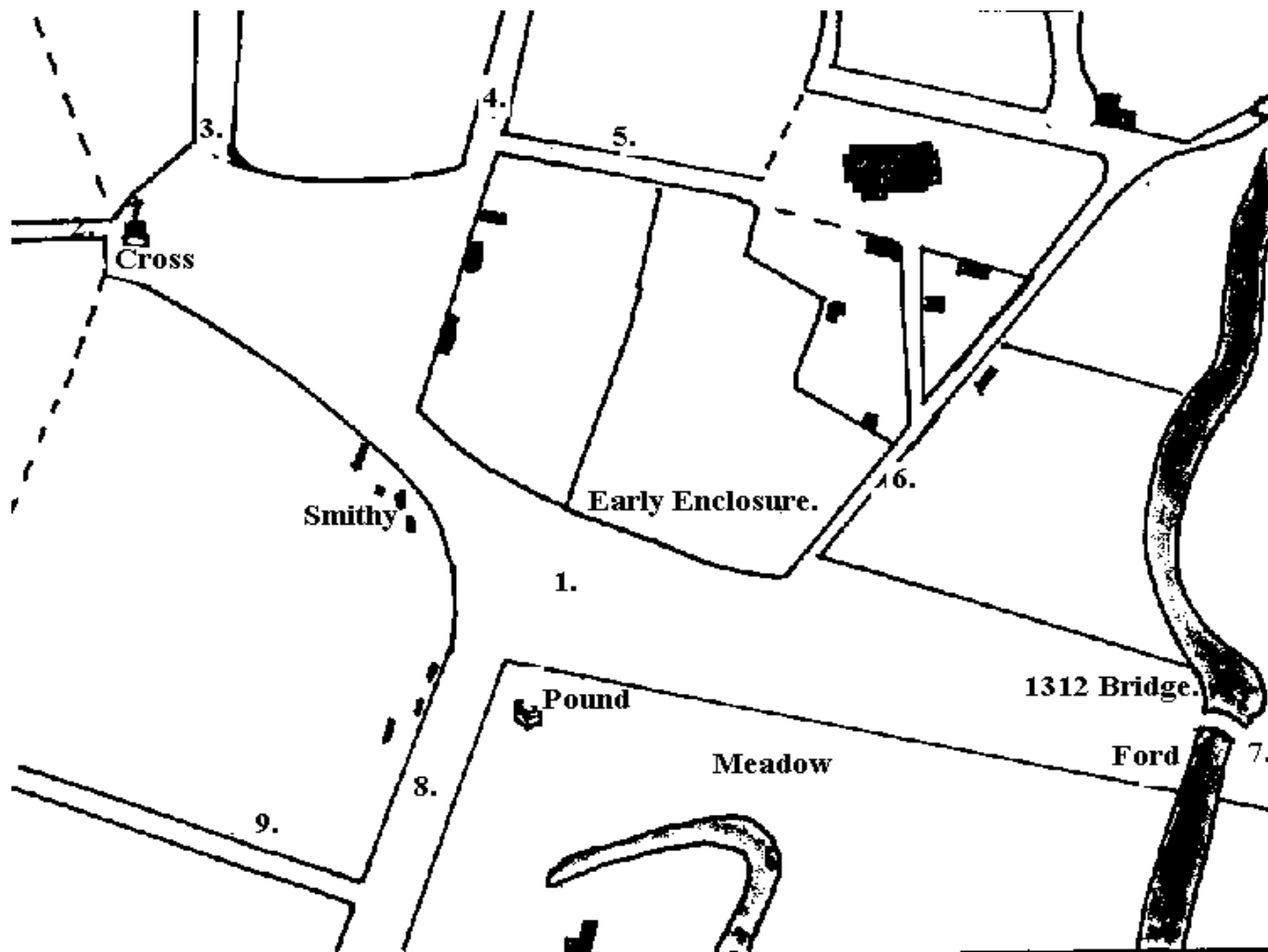
### 1. Historical Development.

Cropredy's Green actually interrupted the plan of the village, rather than forming a centre piece. To the north and south, on the western side of the village Lane, the farms had been laid out in an orderly fashion, totally ignoring the Green between the upper and lower sections of the village.

The two manor farmsteads were completely independent of the Green, preferring to stand near their meadows, and in the case of the larger manorial estate, of the upper mill. These were sited on the eastern side of the village, one above the Green and one below. Tradesmens copyhold properties needing less access to the arable land were more conveniently built along the two inner roads, Church Street and Church Lane.

The Green was a large space below the church, stretching from the Town Cross Fence on the west, down to the river Cherwell on the east. It was not surrounded by property facing into the open pasture area. Nor was it used as a market, the cross was presumably a medieval preaching cross, or a signal for gratitude from travellers who had safely crossed the flooded meadowland. The parishioners required the Green at Cropredy to be kept open as a common pasture, alongside the important route through the parish.

This Royal Way, which has one of the oldest hedges in the area as it comes down Williamscombe hill, ran from Brackley to Warwick. It formed a vital link between the two even older Ridgeway roads. The Banbury, Southam, Coventry route passed through the west end of the parish and was known as the Broadway. The Banbury Way to Daventry passed through Wardington to the east. Cropredy's ford was the first convenient crossing of the River Cherwell north of Banbury. By 1312 a wooden bridge had been built by the Bishop of Lincoln, whose prebendary estate included most of the of the larger ancient parish of Cropredy. While on the subject of the clergy, the only two areas to be taken out of the Green appear to be connected with the Rector. The close made at an unknown date, beneath the church for the Rector's tenant, and a "Freeplace, " between the meadow and the long bridge, granted to John White, chaplain of Cropredy in 1418 [1].The rest of the Green remained as a narrow road with verges at the east end and a large open area at the west. All known as "The South Grene."



### **CROPREDY GREEN c 1600.**

- 1.Green.
- 2.Hayway.
- 3.Backside/Royal Way.
- 4.High Street.
- 5.Church Lane.
- 6.Round Bottom.
- 7.Williamscoote Road/ Royal Way
8. Long Causeway.
- 9.Bottom Way.

Roads entering a great many English Greens arrived at the corners, which would be gated. A convenience that any mover of stock would appreciate. Sheep will not easily leave by a central gate, but will happily follow the leader into a corner one, especially as at Cropredy this was slightly up hill. The two routes to leave the upper end for the Oxhey common and the arable fields were first, the Hayway in the southwest corner by the Cross, and Backside which left by the north west.

Backside really formed part of the Royal Way as it left the Green, before turning west at Kites corner to climb the Oxhey hill, over the communal pasture, and on up to the Broadway at Mollington. Also to Kites corner came the Moorstone way south from Claydon, being joined by the Aston-le-Walls way, before Warkworth hill and Appletree way just by Fennylake corner. All

the traffic from Cropredy's North arable field, Oxhey pasture and the Astmead, came into the village by this route, no doubt causing it to become a great hollowed out way.

Not always wishing the stock to return to the Green at night, the well laid out farm sites had rear entrances to this back lane. The Church Street manor farm also needed a back farm track and a new road was cut to lead from Backside via Newscut Lane to Creampot, the other back lane. This lead round to the rear of the demesne farm and so brought his and the other farmers on Creampot safely home without churning up the Green.

The front entrances to the farms, on the original Main Street (at some time called the High Street in deeds), left the Green in the north east corner. An easier exit for the three farms on the north side of Church Lane, once the Green was reduced in size.

The third route leaving the Green on the north side is Round Bottom. Beginning just above the meadow line, and skirting round below the churchyard, to reach the manor house. Below the church a cluster of dwellings had arrived perhaps in the last quarter of the sixteenth century. In 1613 there were four dwellings to the west of the passage up to the south church gate, and two to the east [2].

The Long Causeway left the Green centrally. This was not so important as the Green narrowed just here and the Bridge Causeway could be blocked whenever stock set off to Banbury market, via the Bourtons. The Bridge Causeway, or lower eastern end of the Green later became the Plantations.

Below the Green the farms on the west side could still avoid trailing over the Green by continuing from the Cross towards Bourton on the line of the present footpath. This met the Bottom Way coming off the Long Causeway opposite the moated second manor house.

The whole village was apparently conveniently set out with the majority of the closes running east to west (This being my theory, but of course without early maps or any firm archeological support). The western line of farms were rebuilt in stone to mostly face the highways at the east end of their crofts.

When a forge was built this was placed on an appropriate corner. They built on the junction of the single south road where it met the Royal Way. Here the maximum amount of horse traffic could be catered for, without getting too entangled with cattle returning to the homesteads. Two cottages were put up to house the blacksmiths. After the Civil War the Brasenose Inn was made up from these two cottages. The site now catered for travellers as well as their horses.

One of the farms on its east to west close, but set a little back from the Long Causeway as it curved onto the Green, was later known as Constone farm. Their north bank and ditch along the close formed the south side of the Green. At first it

looked as though this property had been built on the Green, but the present farm actually faces the river, eastwards and the gable end only faces the Green. This will account for the fact that their leased parcel of land did not include "a Piece of Oxhey" common as did the two other later farms added to the Green.

## **2. Buildings on the Green**

At what time did the Lord of the larger of the two manors decide to build upon the Green? An area which only he had real control of. By the 1570's this had passed into lay hands. A great upheaval began as the Lord and the manorial court began to set out new rules for the village Common Rights [3]. By ancient custom the farmers "hath bene to keep 5 bease and 42 sheep for every yardland and one beast and a breeder for everye ancient cottage." This was reduced in 1575 to 4 cows per yardland and to one cow for the cottagers, partly to improve the pasturage. Partly I suspect to allow in extra tradesmen with rights of commonage.

The actual heads of household (60), do not vary from the count in the mid 1550's to one in 1613, when most of the rebuilding of Cropredy was finished, but after the dreadful 1550's when the population diminished due to plague, many farms fell into disrepair and different families entered into new and old sites in Cropredy. Two new farms were built on the Green. Once again the problem of conflicting evidence may one day alter this presumption, but the newly transcribed vicar's accounts definitely have the Toms and the Hunts on the Green in 1613. These two farms also both appear in the 1578 and 1588 meadow lists [4]. I am presuming they had just been built on the east side of the broader Green facing west towards the cross. Later in the 1660's the then Lord of the manor adds to Toms house, and this was the material once thought to indicate a new building on the site [5]. The two pieces of the Oxhey common allocated to these two farms and to no other farmer, indicates the way their new parcel of land had to be squeezed out of the land available. The two pieces being unique, went on being called Toms and Hunts pieces until 1775, when the fields were all enclosed. These two early hedged fields would have had many advantages for the two farms. The only other buildings on the Green in the early seventeenth century were two cottages belonging to the Toms and Hunts farms.

By the time of the Civil War the Green had shrunk to perhaps a third of the original area. The eastern part was little more than a well ditched Way with wide verges. It still had no buildings. The next record is a Court Baron of 1717 [6]. It tells how the Green acquired three cottages. A John Richards (or Richardson) had built on the north edge of the Green between Backside and the High Street. He had erected a stone and thatch dwelling around 1702. John and his wife had lost four of their six children. Was this why he needed a good house? Later they had four more who survived. The cottage would be without land and after 1717 there would be a yearly quit rent.

On the south side of the narrow section, in between the deep ditch and the road, Thomas Davis was also presented for his cottage. Another stone and thatched dwelling built apparently around 1677. The lintels of Plantation Cottage do resemble

others altered in the same period. Next door a William Golby had just completed his new cottage. He was a stone mason and three of his sons were to follow his trade.

We still have no record of when the two or three cottages were added on the north verge opposite, each with a stone inglenook. Around 1800 Copes of Hanwell having purchased Cropredy Lawn and several cottages in Cropredy, altered these into a row of four to match Copes Cottages.

This part of the Green was renamed the Plantations after the Revd John Ballard planted the triangle of grass opposite the Brasenose Inn in 1848 , and the remaining open verges with trees and hedges in 1814 and 1834 The College then charged him a yearly rent. The Parish Council took these over and has cared for them since.

Once the farmers had the grazing rights of the verge outside their newly enclosed fields, they set about taking it inside their boundary. The first to do this on the Green was Mr Cobb the owner of Constone. He had a close running from the farmyard westwards and behind the town cross. At that time the cross was well inside the Green though on the western verge. After a word with the College (who since 1788 had all the manorial rights) [7], Mr Cobb was able to move his hedge to the edge of the road. His old bank with its elm trees were kept, but the fence removed. The cross was now in his pasture field quite removed from the Green.

Others pushed out their wooden fences bit by bit, until the visiting Bursar presented them at the next Court. After the usual fine was paid, they promised to pay a yearly sum and the new front gardens were theirs.

### **3. The Residents**

The Toms and Hunts continued to farm through the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth, Hunts turned to baking and then left. Bortons, the new tenants were blacksmiths who worked there for half a century. After a period of time lodgers kept the house going as Mary Ann wrote in her 1876 letters. After the Bortons, Thomas Cherry moved his business down there from the old chapel.

At Toms farming continued up to 1788, when the whole farm unit moved to the new Hill Farm. The property was sold and into the house end came Charles Cook a master carpenter from Oxford. His relation William Kinman set up a saddlery business in the converted barn end. This was to last 100 years. Once sold off, to Mr James Lambert, the two were let as private residences.

Constone ceased to farm and the land was separated from the house. First blacksmiths and then stationmasters took up residence there. The big barn was made into three units with a basket maker near the house, the smithy in front and the rest of the barn stored builders material for the Woodyard.



Behind in the farm yard the Cooknells had a 500 gallon tank sunk into the ground and their own petrol pump for the three lorries. They worked to a radius of 40 miles not only as coal merchants but also as hauliers. They would deal with Hadlands the millers and haul their flour. The coal came via the railway after the boats more or less packed it in. Coal coming from the Warwickshire coal mines, now shut. At the wharf it used to come 30 tons at a time. Before the lorries they had a cart and two horses. A grey and a brown. The mares were kept in Anker's field over the railway bridge. When Stephen moved back home to Plantation Cottage the stables there housed the horses. His daughter Emily grew up to become the secretary and look after things. "In the evenings I had to take the two big shire horses to their field. Once there was a tramp in the hovel there. The policeman had to send him off. Another time when the hunt was out, one of the greys leapt the gate and did not come back until night time. Grandfather Thomas started the coal business. It was eventually sold to Wrights who sold to Charringtons," Mrs Emily Bradley remembered. Edgar Cooknell said his "Uncle Stib had a good steady horse called Poppin which worked hard and slow getting up the hills."

On the north side of the Green another cottage had been added and the space between filled in with a tiny cottage. Mr Bonham's saddlery at the west end and a good 50 years earlier Mr Thomas Smith the shoemakers house at the other. Not having children the Smith's took in lodgers and ran the sub post office, before it moved to 3 Chapel Row. In the three cornered encroachment Mr Amos had a shoe shop built for Mr Thomas Cooknell. Later the post office returned to be run from Harris's house. From there it went across to the Woodyard.

On the Plantation part of the Green only Plantation Cottage in 1910 paid business rates. The rest of the trade took place at the wharfs. The south wharf belonged to the Brasenose College and Lampreys leased it. Smiths the builders at Holmleigh followed and had a smithy there. The Botts family were the next to lease it as a coal wharf. The old weigh bridge house is still there. The middle wharf was for stone. Across the road the Oxford Canal also had a wharf. They pulled down the old small holding in the 1770's and built the Navigation Inn, though this did not last for more than two decades. A fine corn wharf with stabling was put up next to the road. In Mary Smiths time the wharfinger's family ran a very successful dame school. The other half of Reads small farm close, cut in half by the canal, became Mr Walker's Bridge House after he left the Wharf. Bridge House was a farm, then a private residence and latterly the Canal shop.

#### **4. The Greens Communal Property**

The **Bridge** we have mentioned arrived in 1312. It was a constantly needing repairs at the cost of the parish. In 1691,1780 and 1886 major repairs were needed. Then in 1937 the wooden rails were replaced with stone as an almost complete rebuild was undertaken.

At the other end of the Green the **Town Cross**, now know as the Cup and Saucer, is all that is left of the preaching cross. The top of the shaft has gone and all that remains of the "spoon" has been cemented into the hollow base. The square base

has weathered badly and the former decorations have vanished. At the corners of the base, plain stops were made, making an octagonal shape. Between these it is believed there were once carved faces.



20. Cup and Saucer c1908

The Revd Thomas Holloway set down in his accounts in August 1587 one custom Cropredy observed at that time [8]:

"Uppon the evening that west  
meddow ys cutt downe the dolsters  
wth the neybour's cominge unto the  
cross at or nere Edward hunts house

there do the farmers of the parsonadge

of Croperdy pay to the dolsters in  
money by the name of reringe money  
the sume of iij's iij'd

"Yt hath bene soaccustomed that the said money  
wth the losses of other mowinge that daie in the  
meddow was by the Dolsters used to b[u]y bredd  
and ale & gyve the same amonge the poor  
in the towne & makinge the mowers ther  
drinke wth others of the towne."

Were the losses, the gleanings raked up and sold? Also had the Cross been always by the 'Town Fence'? Or below the Green by the houses there? It leaves more mysteries to be solved.

**The Pound** was needed once the road gates around the Green had gone. It was built we think in the north west corner of the Brasenose Manor Farm. Just south of Plantation Cottage. In 1814 a general tightening up of discipline was tried and the pound repaired, a new lock for the village handcuffs and the **Stocks** practically rebuilt. Charles Cook a carpenter, who lived at Goodrest, part of Toms old farm, did the wood work and William Borton, the blacksmith who lived in Hunts former farm, made the new joint hinges, altered 3 pins and three keys for 5 shillings [9]. Mr Cook's bill mentions " to makeing the stocks & putting Downe and repairing the Pound 19s 10d" [10]. We have no idea where the stocks were sited.

**The Seat** around the Coronation tree. Major Slack is supposed to have planted this tree in 1902. It has had at least three seats. The last being made by Mr S. Roland Cherry.

**Posts** appeared first in 1929. 'They came from Appletree House (when they were doing that up) from their drive, so they weren't new when they first came... post and chain, and they wanted them up. So we bought them back here. Sound then they were and paintable. Oak. Good oak and good still [1984]...The lorries used to take a short cut across the Green in front of the houses and it was all rutted up and an awful mess, so we [Parish Council] put the posts up and a notice. No Parking on the Green." S.R.Cherry. The kerbs were suggested to save the edges when the bus turned round at the Green.

**Fingerposts** were put on the triangle opposite the Brasenose, which had become William Pettifer's garden. Other posts were first the telegraph posts in the 1920's and then the electricity poles in the 1930's. Thirty mile an hour signs started near the Green, but have hopped in stages further away over the years. Name plates arrived to amuse the visitors and help the delivery vans, parcels no longer coming on the carrier's cart who knew where all the parishioners lived.

### **References:**

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4. MSdd par Cropredy c25/2 Oxfordshire Archives.
5. Boothby Letter books Add. MSS 71960-62 British Library Manuscripts Collections.
6. MSdd par Dew c4 Oxfordshire Archives.
7. BNC 552 dated 1793.
8. MSdd par Cropredy c25/2.
9. MSdd par Cropredy OA/4/1 Constable papers
10. MSdd par Cropredy OA/4/2 Constable papers.

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## Appendices.

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### Appendix One.

#### Cooknells Family Tree.

1. **William Cooknell** (1798-1858) born Appletree. m. **Jane** (1790-1836). 6 children:

**Elizabeth, James, Sarah, Stephen** (1829-1847), **John** (1831- ?), **Thomas** (bp 8 June 1834-bur 25 Aug 1913).

2. **Thomas Cooknell** (1834-1913), Carter, Coal-merchant. m. **Mary Ann** Checkley (1843-1925). Lived Plantation Cottages. 5 children:

i) **Thomas** (born 4 July 1862 d.28 Nov 1946) Grave 68. m. **Harriet** Alexander 3 March 1886 at Brailes.(1862-d 22 May 1956).G.68. Lived on Cropredy Green. 8 children.

ii) **Ellen** (bp 18 Dec 1864-1956) m. **William Neal**, Builder. Lived 10 Chapel Row. One son **Arthur**. Brought up Louie Howes.

iii) **Elizabeth** (bp 30 Aug 1868-d. 8 Mar 1933) G.67. m. **Thomas Timms** (d.I Feb 1944 aged 74) G.67. One son **Cyril**. Lived Plantation Cottages, Chapel Green & 9 Chapel Row.

iv) **Stephen** (bp 23 Nov 1873- d.23 Dec 1954) C.S7.Coal Merchant. m. **Emily** Hawkes 17 Dec 1902 (bur 1 Sept.1908 aged 33).2 children: **Emily** (bp 24 May 1903) m. **Tom** Bradley. **Harry** (bp 7 Aug 1907). Coal merchant.

v) **Mary Ann** (bp 7 Aug 1883). Died.

3. **Thomas** Cooknell (1862-1946) Shoemaker.m **Harriet** Alexander. 8 children:

i) **Mary Ann** (born 14 Aug 1886 died 9 Nov 1918 aged 32) m. **Charles** Hickman June 1909. 3 Children: **Lilian, Denis, Alwyn**. Lived Church Lane.

ii) **Thomas Checkley** (born 17 April 1888 d. Nov 1977). m. **Annie** Etchells of Wrexham. Went to W Australia in 1911.One daug. **Gladys Constance**.

iii) **William** (born 22 Sept 1889 d.July 1937) m. **Annie** Fairbrother of Woodford Halse. Two sons: **Maurice & Bernard**.

iv) **Percy Alexander** (born 24 Nov 1893 d.17 March 1964. m. **Margaret Lucy** Bott of Cropredy aged 33 on 28 Aug 1922.Rly. Two sons: **Roy & Gordon**. Living at Warwick.

v) **MABEL KATE** (born 18 July 1896 ) m.(1) 31 Mar 1923 to **Cedric** White of London (born 29 Dec 1896. d 17 Feb 1926 aged 29). Royal Navy 12 yrs. One daug: **Pamela Mary. Mabel Kate** m.(2) 22 Feb. 1929 to **Horace Neville** Durrant of

London in Montreal, Canada. Lived in U.S.A. until 1937. H. N.Durrant died 1 Sept 1948. After 7 years in England, Mabel left for Phoenix, Arizona to live with Pam.

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vi) **Edgar** (born 18 July 1899 d.5 July 1983) m. **Lilian Julia** Fisher of S.Wales. Returned to Cropredy. Two daugs: **Iris** m. **David** Rogers and **Joan** m.- Gardner.

vii) **John Checkley** (born 22 Nov 1903 d.21 July 1981) m **Gertrude** Robinson of Banbury in 1938. No children.

viii) **Gladys Alexander** (born 30 July 1907 ) m **F** Auton 31 May 1930 at Cropredy. Lives at Slough.One son **Clifford** (born 23 April 1931 ) living in Tasmania.

G.68 means Grave 68 on Church Survey. C.57 means Cemetery Grave.

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## Appendices.

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### Appendix Two .

Who's Who

P C. = Parish Councillor. CC & RR = Cropredy Club & Reading Room. G. = Cropredy grave stone. C = Cemetery grave.

**JOHN ALLITT** (1822-1909) G.15. Butcher & Baker. Son of James & Mary nee Checkley m. Ann Haynes. One daug. Emily Ann. Lived Copes Cottages, Bakehouse Church Lane and Home Farm. Built the Church Rooms.

**JOYCE ALLITT** (b 1836-1925) 9th child of 10 daug. of James & Mary and sister to John Allitt. Father carpenter. Joyce and her daug Susan (1857- 1925) kept a shop in double fronted cottage in Cope's Row. Dr. Bartlett used their front room for a surgery. Also used by Conservatives.

**GEORGE THOMAS AMOS** (1860-1922), Farmer, son of Thomas & widow Mary Ann nee Anker nee James. Lived at Bridge House then Prospect House Gt. Bourton. M. twice. Alice G.239 Cropredy 2 sons: George Walker Amos (1886-1951), Thomas Martin (1887- ).Gt. Bourton G.82. PC.1907. Hon. CC & RR member. Singer. Presided at Smokers Concert 1906.

**THOMAS AMOS** (1834-1919) born Williamscothe. m.1859 widow Mary Ann Anker. Innkeeper of Brasenose until c1876. Coal merchant, farmer. Farmed Vicar's Glebe 1882-1898.1891 moved to Gt. B. let son have Bridge House inherited from uncle Geo. Walker G.388. Thos landlord to Thos Cooknell. C. of E. Trustee of Bell Land 1874ff. Walker's Charity. Purchased land in Bourton. G.388 Cropredy. Father of George Thomas (1860-1922) and Frederick Thomas (1866-1872).

**KEZIA ANKER** ( 1838-1922) sp. Lived Beech House with bachelor brother William (1840- 1902) then had a companion.G.498. Last of Anker family who arrived at Brasenose Inn 1694.

**JANE BARNETT** born Drayton c 1846. Widow. Son John born in 1880. Lived first in Chapel Row with husb. John, then Plantation cottages. In 1910 Rate book. Slide 14c. Buried in Bucks.

**REVD. GEORGE BARR** M A (1852-1944) G.250a. m Rebecca (1852- 1924). Came to Cropredy from Long Hope, Gloucestershire in 1917 aged 65. Described by Arthur Pettifer as "a little short fellow...Stand no humbug from nobody...but were anything wrong he'd have that put right...A real old English country gentleman...He could make things go." Left 1929.

**LIONEL JASPER BARTLETT** MRCS LRCP London. Physician & Medical officer & Public vaccinator, Middleton Cheney & Cropredy district. Banbury Guardians Committee. Lived at Wardington. Married with children. In Cropredy at least by 1931 at 'The Poplars' TN.6. Mr H.W.Jones farmed Poplar Farm. Moved surgery to house.

**JAMES WILLIAM BONHAM** (1868-1960) C73. Saddler & Harnessmaker. m.i) Elizabeth Smith (1869-1909) G.152.m. ii) Flossie May (1887-1965) C74.JWB born in Middleton Cheney. Started Cropredy aged 21.Saddlers on Green. Methodist. Singer, Sunday school, PC.1897- 1925.1937-1949.Several times Chairman. Rural District Council for 43 years. On School Board. Special Constable 1914. Poores Land Comm. & Northend Charity. Co-op Comm. Small-holding. Hort. Soc Comm. Pony and trap. Chd: Hilda May(1895-1928), Harold J.(1899-),John H.(1913-), Edith M.(1915-), Daisy E.(1919-), Violet A.(1919-), Brenda J.(1920-),Una J. (1922-).

**JOHN JAMES BONNER** (1857-1911) G.232 School Master, son of Edw. & Ann, carpenter of Boddicott. m Clara Louisa Wilkins of Adderbury. In Cropredy Sept.1884 with sister Mrs Abigail Burbidge, asst. teacher untill 1894. Then Clara asst. Lived School House until ill. Died of cancer of liver. A much respected teacher, organist & choirmaster. Sec. to Hort. Soc, CC & RR sec 20 + yrs. One son died G.231.Sister Louisa m W.J.Lambert. Niece m. Robt. Smith. Mrs Bonner was Mrs Eriksen's favourite aunt. When ill rented rooms in Springfield farm. Mrs retired to Adderbury.

**JAMES WATTS BORTON** (1837-1895) G.42, Gdson of Wm Borton Blacksmith at the Green (d1840) Mother Sarah left James her houses on North side of Green. He lived there. Ex publican by 1891. Left no will, houses passed to Mary Ann Fisher nee Borton (see 1876 Letters). Drowned skating on Clattercote pool.

**MISS BRAND.** Lived Andrews Farm with Mother 1901-1903, which was rented by brother Revd John Brand, curate at Bourton 1901, vicar St Albans, Dartford. Trained Trinity, Cambridge. Tried to buy Andrews farm (see BNC 210). Moved to Monkeytree House 1903. Left c1911. Mother: Mary Ann Brand (1820-1911).

**THE BUSBY Family.** Parents Richard(1858-1917) & Jane (1856- 1920).Carter living in Chapel Row. Four sons members of CC & RR on Comm. Harry (1902-),Wallace (1907-),Percy (1908-), and Fred a singer. Horace (1898-d.war.) Harry Hatton (1884-1940) m Mary Elizabeth Dunn. (see Arthur Pettifer's Book 5) Arthur (1895-), and Kate. Harry member of pig club.

**ARCHIBALD JOHN CAVE** (1889-1915) G.273, son of Fred. I. He m. Daisy Hawkins. Son Archibald Roland (1916-1947) (see A. Pettifer Bk 5). In 1907 on CC&RR Comm. when 18.

**FREDERICK ISAAC CAVE** (1862-1938) born Culworth.G.3I3a, m Mary Ann Hawkins of Maidenhead (1855-1937). Mechanic. At Cropredy a painter. Went blind. Ran shop with wife in Red Lion St.Two daughters died. Sons: Reginald, George Frederick (1887-) & Archibald John. Fred on CC&RR Comm. 1888-1893, Reg. 1902/3. Fred member of pig club.

**ALBAN CHERRY** (1872-1956) m Florence Mary Gardner (1875- 956) C 2I. Building trade. Chd: Elsie M.(1898), Herbert A.G.(1900), Arthur T.(1903), J. Marlow (1907), Albert L.(1910), A. Rodney (1914), Kathleen M.(1920). Alban was the oldest son of Thomas Cherry.

**ERNEST CHERRY** (1874-?) m Minnie (1876-1949) G.309a. Second son of TCherry. Methodist, played organ. P.C. 1925-1934. Special constable 1914. CC&RR in 1895 aged 2I. Lived in Plantation Cottages. Daughter Laura see photo. with Thos Cooknell Snr.[8] page 15..

**THOMAS CHERRY** (1845-1935) Stone Mason, third son of 8 chd. of Wm & Charlotte. m Mary Ann Pettipher. Chd: in 1881 census, Alban B, Ernest 6, Herbert 2,William a baby, May born later. Lay Preacher. Helped to build 1881 Chapel. Employing 3 men & lived in old Chapel until after 1891, then The Green. Window in Chapel.PC.1894.

**STEPHEN COOKNELL** (1873-1956)C57. Coal-Merchant.In 1902 m Emily Hawkes (1875-1908) 2 chd.Emily (1903-1985)m TBradley,Harry (1907-1955)CS6.Lived 10 Red Lion St. then back to Plantation Cott.& Woodview. Coal & Haulage yard south side of Green. Member CC&RR.Member of pig club. **Cooknell's Family Tree in Appendix One.**

**THOMAS COOKNELL** Senior (1844-1913) Carrier & coal merchant, son of Wm & Jane. Lived Plantation Cottage m Mary Ann Checkley(1843-1925) born at Plantation Cottage, a dressmaker. Children: Thomas (1862- 1946), Ellen (1864), Elizabeth (1868-1933), Stephen (1873-1954). Ray Cherry said "A lot of bobbins were found in the house."

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**THOMAS COOKNELL** Junior (1862-1946) shoemaker m 1886 Harriett Alexander (1862-1956) G.6B. Eight children. Lived on the Green. Special Constable 1914. Allotment. On CC&RR Comm. until 1891. Member of pig club.

**JOHN COWLEY** of Wardington, gardener, m in 1857 Sarah Cherry ( 1836-1927) daughter of Wm & Elizabeth. Aunt to Thos. In 1909 they lived in Station Rd in Stone cottages since demolished. As widow shared cottage with Ann Constable G91. (See Gertrude Mold, Book 3).

**THOMAS CUMMINGS**, Landlord of Brasenose Inn after Jonah Boote & before Albert Chapman. In Kellys 1903 & 1910. Owned Stonecote, Church Lane in 1910.

**GEORGE DUMBLETON** (1856-1916) wife Sarah (1861-1922) Son of John and Sarah. 9th of 10 chd. Lived next to Caves shop in Red Lion St. Allotment. Member of pig club comm.

**WILLIAM ELKINGTON** (1854-1937) Sawyer for Lamberts. m 1880 to Deborah Lambert (1854- ) d of John, coal-merchant. Wm born in Warmington. A small round shouldered man. (see Arthur Pettifer's Book 5).

**J. PETER ERIKSEN** (1894-1965) CS9. Farmer School Farm m 1921 Hilda Louise Lambert (1899-1978). Moved to new house N/W of Green. Four children.

For **JOHN FRENCH** see page 64.

**JOHN G. FRENCH** ( 1861- ) born at Cropredy, son of Wm & Sarah. Worked at Lawn Farm. Married Mary A. Alexander ( 1857- ). Children: Sarah M.(1881-), Kate E.(1882 -), and Cyril. John worked at Oathill, Upper Prescote Farm and Cherry's. Retired to Stonecote. Mary French acted as a local midwife as well as a dress-maker.

**CHARLES WILLIAM GARDNER** (1869- ) m Maud Bailey (1866- 1914). G 111. Daughter. Florrie (b1901) m Eric Sewell. Son of John F & Ann. Plumbers & glaziers, 2 Red Lion St. Charles moved to Old Chapel. PC.1913-1919, 1922-24. On CC&RR Comm. aged 21-33 Treasurer. Partnered with Fred. Parents had nine children. 4 died & are buried in Gardner's corner opposite in churchyard. Father J.F. Gardner once choir member and until a long and painful illness, never failed to be at two Sunday services. Died 1901. G.108.

**FREDERICK EDWARD GARDNER** ( 1875-) m Marie Teagle (1880- 1924) G.110. Plumber & glazier lived 2 Red Lion St. Daughter Yvonne (1919). PC.1913-1924. On CC&RR Comm. aged 18-27. Sold business in 1928. Moved to Leamington Spa.

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**WILLIAM GODSON & RHODA** (see Book-1). PC.1910-1939, often chairman. Began providing Meat Teas for CC&RR in 1898 & 1899 rather than members doing meal. Baker living in Church Lane. Born Great Bourton (Book 1, Appendix Two, p.50 for Family Tree).

**HENRY LYONS GOLBY** ( 1866- ) carpenter, Relieving Officer & Registrar. m Eliza McGillivray, cook, sister to Mrs Albert Shirley. Henry son of Wm & Amy. Lived Old Yard and then Goodrest. Left village 1914. Widow returned to 2 Chapel Row. "Every Thursday he travelled by train to Banbury to fetch the money for the old people. Then on Friday he used to start dishing this out at Gt. Bourton from house to house. Also in Hanwell." School Truancy officer. "An austere man, Henry." His nephew Colin Shirley had his tools.

**LUCIUS GOODMAN** (1847-1928) born Farnborough. Master saddler. To Cropredy as a widower c1880 with Four children. In 1881 Kate 6, Louisa 4, Matilda 3, George I. "He hobbled about on crutches...He liked to go mushrooming with his crutches & walking stick with a blade on the end, and cut these mushrooms and put them under his arm. He was a nice old chappy" S.R.Cherry. Lived in Anker's cottages in the High Street looked after by Kate.

**Revd FREDERICK. J. GREENHAM**, vicar Nov.1898-Feb 1907. His daughters the Misses E.M. & C.E. took an interest in the village. Had a good choir, boys cricket team played in Vicarage paddock. A very "set straight forward man in his ways, but a good vicar." President of CC&RR. Known to hate late meetings. Had College water laid on 1898. Went to Wootten-under - Edge.

**WILLIAM GRIFFIN** (1830-1921) Commission Agent, known as "Gent Griffin," walked about the village with a stick talking to people. Arrived about 1883 until he died. Lived at Lyndhurst. m Ann Whately Fairbrother (1828-1909) G.472. Parents of Harry who went to Texas, Mary Whately Griffin (c1857) m 1886 Thos Parnell Parnell, William went to Texas, returned and m. a Jarvis, George Jeffkyns Griffin (c1859-) m Margaret Eagles of Poplar Farm (1856-), George farmed 3 College farms, Manor, Station & Thickthorn up to 1903 George on PC, left to farm at Radstone. Elizabeth m.a Weddell & had at least five children. One, Elizabeth (1894-) left a post card album. A Weddell provided the Daily Mail & Titbits to R.R.1898/99.

**RICHARD JOHN GRISWOLD** (1850-1907) m **LOUISA** (1854-1923) G.444. Owned Oxhey farm, rented Manor farm house and took in lodgers. Children: John (1885-1957)C46, went to Canada. Sold Oxhey farm. Winifred Mary (1888-), Emma (1890-), Evelyn Sarah (1893-). In 1881 census John Griswold, a retired farmer, lived at Goodrest on the Green with son Richard, then 31 and unmarried.

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**WILLIAM HARRIS** m -Legg. Lived at Stonecote. Vicar's coachman. Moved to Green about 1911. Ran Post Office and in 1920's telephone exchange. On CC&RR Comm. 1901 to 1906.

**FREDERICK HAVELL** Police constable. Lived for some years on the Green. 1907/08 on CC&RR Comm. m. Susannah. Chd: Charles, Cecil and Thomas William (1903), Edith and Dora.

**WILLIAM J. W. HAWKES** (1847-1932) stonemason, son of William a shepherd from Chipping Warden. In 1881 m Mary A. Haslewood (1849-). Lived in Old Yard, Children: Annis (1873) m. O.Yates. Emily (1875) m. Stephen Cooknell. Thomas W (1882) m F.J.Green. Bricklayer (see Colin Shirley's letters). Brought up Grand daughter Ivy Yates. PC.1894-1897. Had an allotment. Son lived next door and worked for Captain Booth of Banbury before moving to Leamington Spa. Member of pig club.

**CHARLES HICKMAN** (18---1967) platelayer. m Mary Ann Cooknell (1886-1918). Lived in Church Lane. Three children: Clara Lily, Denis Charles (1911), Alwyn May (1914). In school log book: 25 Oct 1918."42 cases of Influenza and school closed for 3 weeks." Nov 11 & 18th "Mrs Grubb and Mrs Hickman died aged 31 & 32 years old." Married again. Allotment. Member of pig club (see Denis Hickman's letters). Mabel Durrant nee Cooknell wrote: "I was not able to see Denis during his young years, as when I was home Charles would not let them come to see us, and of course I would not go to their home, but I used to talk to Agnes his second wife, and she talked to me about the children. She was good to them."

**SARAH JAKEMAN** (1840-1931) Lived in several cottages in the village. Plagued by illness. Widow of Daniel who was born at Milton, an agricultural worker. In 1881 family had John 17, Eliza 12, Daniel 9 all born at Wroxton. Son John was on Comm. of CC&RR then left the village in 1891. Widow for 35 years "A good wife, a good mother, a good church woman & a devout communicant" RWS. Very deaf.

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**GEORGE KING** (1848-1933) blacksmith m Sarah (1847-). Educated man, came from Bletchington with wife c1878. His brother lived with them. In 1881 family had Andrew 12, George 10, Florence 9, Sarah 6, Joseph 5, John 3, Richard 1, Edith was born (1882) m Wm Henry Davey 1920 went to London, William born ( 1884), Isabel ( 1886) m Stuart Lidster 1918 & died young leaving Four children (see Pettifer's Book 3). John when 20-22 on CC&RR Comm. then left village. Richard aged 19-26 on same Comm. A good singer. Married & lived next to Pettifers in Creampot. Died of Cancer. G316. At the 1906 CC&RR Smoking Concert "Messrs King assisted by John Shirley gave Changes and Pieces on the Handbells in a skilfull manner." George known for: his fine smithying, his family of handbell ringers and his drinking habits. Even signing the pledge on several occasions. In 1891 living at Constone as Blacksmith, then moved to Red Lion St. before taking up to College cottages in Creampot lane. Member of the pig club. Violinist.

**JAMES LAMBERT (JIM)** (1834-1916) wheelwright, builder & contractor. In 1881 employed four men and two sons. m1858 to Margaret M. Allitt (1833-1867) G.200. Moved to Home Farm after 1909. Five children: Mary Ann (1859-1934)G.201, William James(1861-1947), John (1863-1922) went to Claydon, Father of Cyril Lambert who farmed BNC Manor farm 1926ff. Samuel & Sarah G.200. PC.1894. Owned property in several villages including Fairview & Goodrest on Cropredy Green. Lived years in Bourton, C.W there. Held twice weekly carpenter classes at 6.30pm 1901/2.

**LOUIS LAMBERT** (1866-1943)marr. Worked for Stephen Cooknell and also Rural District Council on Roads. Village sexton. Kept church and churchyard with wife. His brother Jack lived with them. Member of pig club. Member of CC&RR Comm. when 36. Mrs Lambert a dressmaker (see Arthur Pettifer's Book 5).

**WILLIAM JAMES LAMBERT** ( 1861-1947) carpenter and builder, coal merchant. m (1) 1892 Louise E. Bonner (1862-1915) G.257. Five children: .Margaret (1893-1968) C.51. Leonard J.B (1894-1917) killed in Palastine. Harold W died. Hilda



Louise(1899-1978) m Jens Pater Eriksen 1921. Willam m (2) 1920 to Gertrude A Rayson (1882-1956) C.20 son Clifford. William Parish Clerk in 1900. PC.1907.When 27 on CC&RR Comm. Lived at Wharf then Home Farm.

**Revd MAURICE MALTBY**, vicar 1907-1917 Married. Took in lodgers. "Mr Maltby used to get stuck for words and would tug and tug at his buttons until it flew off and then the words would come" T Amos. In 1907 "Presided in an able and pleasant manner" at the Smoking Concert for R.R. Provided Daily Express for RR. On Sundays visited Neithrop Hospital in a pony and tub driven by Mr Harris. At Christ Church Banbury in 1901.

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**THOMAS MILLER**, station master, lived at Constone. Bellringer. PC.1925-1931. Member of pig club. "Dapper man with a waxed moustache. Edwardian type of a man. Everything just so. Kept kids out of the Station. The Squire, the Vicar, the Doctor, the Stationmaster and the village Schoolmaster." Denis C.Hickman. Went to Aynho after Cropredy.

**GEORGE NEAL** ( 1865- ) farmer at Claydon. Played in Wesleyan Band. CC&RR member in 1895. Brother to William, builder. Son of James and Ann Neal G.467.

**WILLIAM NEAL** (1859-1923) m Ellen Cooknell (1864-1956). Apprenticed to Thomas Cherry. Partner to Richard Sumner as wheelwrights and builders at the Woodyard. Played in Wesleyan Band. Chapel member. Owned 4-10 Chapel Row. One son Arthur, builder, at Retford. Brought up Loie Howe. PC.1898-1910,1913-19.

**ALFRED PARGETER** (1842-1915) m1862 Harriett Timms (1840- 1906) of Great Bourton. 1871 census James 7, Evis 3. and 1881 census Amy 9. Pargeters lived down Creampot, then on Green. Son became a blacksmith then farmer and moved to Andrews farm. m & had one child of ?3 baptised at chapel (see Pettifer's Book 3).

**BERNHARD PARGETER**(1883-1966) C23,saddler m Ellen (1881-1976) Served first World War.Worked with J.W Bonham all his life apart from war. Lived Jitty. Three children: Gertrude Ellen (1910) m W.H.Lewis. Florence May (1914) m R.Wheeler. Ronald Wm (1915) m Mildred. On Ex servicemen's Hall Comm. Member of pig club.

**GEORGE PARGETER** (1850-1927 )m Sarah (1852- )shoemaker. Sunday School superintendent at Chapel. Born down Creampot son of Thos & Sarah. His sister Sophia m Daniel Wells. George had a store in Creampot and lived at 9 Chapel Row. Children: Ada 5, & Charlotte 3 in 1881. Grace looked after father when widowed. A short man, called Lofty.

**GEORGE PETTIPHER** (1864-1954) m 1888 Elizabeth Alice (1868-1939) G.408, stonemason Son of John and Jane. Liberal man whose cottage in Station Row was used as headquarters. Six children. Comm. CC&RR for 12 years with younger brother Henry. PC.1896-1899.

**HENRY PETTIPHER** (1875-1950) m Lil (1879-1948) G433. Lived south end of Copes Cottages. Railway man. Son of John and Jane. CC&RR Comm.1893-1905.

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Father John (see Pettifer's Book 3). PC.1894-1907. Member of pig club.

**SAMUEL PETTIPHER** (1847-1927) m 1867 Rachel Elizabeth Rathbone(1850-1912) G.410. Sixteen children. lived in Anker's Row in High St.(see Pettifer's Book 3).

**WILLIAM PRATT** (1836-1911) m Sarah Jane (1830-1882) G 341, canal lock keeper Inland Waterway. Children: Charles, John Henry (1859- 1880), May, and in 1881 census William 16, Ellen 14, Betsy 10, Edward 8, Thomas 3. The last son became treasurer of CC&RR "a good man for the office" he was then 22. Remembered as a singer and asst. officer 1904. Relieving officer and Registrar and lived on Chapel Green (see Arthur Pettifer's Book 5). Daughter Evelyn.

**JACK PREW** worked at Manor Farm, Station Rd for 40 years through several tenants: Mr G.Smith, Mr G.Griffin, Mr R and T Taylor and Mr A Smith. Ill in 1928 and lost his job plus his tied cottage which he'd lived in since rebuilt in 1898/9. Old tenant with Jos Williams. Worked afterwards on Station farm and rented another cottage for much higher rent. Member of pig club.

**JOHN SELBY** (1846-1932) G.491 Late of Wormleighton. Farmer retired to Cropredy Green c1904. Moved to 7 Red Lion St. Children: Ada May (1873-1938), Ellen Mabel (1874-1947), Alice Mildred (1874-1955). Miss Tew who taught piano and had a Dame school left for Stoke Bruene to live with brother. Allotment.

**ALBERT WILLIAM SHIRLEY** (1867-1936)stonemason m 1900 Elizabeth McGillivray (1865-1949) born at Kilchoan, Knoydart, Invernesshire.G.530. Lived at Old Yard, Creampot Lane. Children: Christina (born 1920) and William Colin (1906-1987) m Helen E. Matheson (see Colin's letters). Albert on Comm. of CC&RR. Brother to John Shirley and Comm. partner.

**JOHN SHIRLEY** (1864-1942) wheelwright m Elizabeth (Bessie) Cox (1866-1935) G527. Parents of Arthur William(1891-1947) a baker. Lived at Dunchurch. John at new tide cottage. Creampot Lane. Apprenticed to Lamberts. Worked for Sumner and Neal. Bellringer, singer member of CC&RR Comm. Allotment. Comm. member of pig club (see Arthur Pettifer's Book).

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**WILLIAM SHIRLEY** (1841-1920) shoemaker, son of John and Ann. Brother to Stephen I Red Lion St, and Mrs Joseph Williams. Lived on Green in now Craft Shop, by 1903 in bottom BNC row down Creampot at east end. Worked for Thomas Cooknell. Allotment.

**Major JAMES SLACK** (1822-1902) m Jane (1826-1893). Jane was not at home in 1891. Many say he had no wife but contrary to popular opinion on his G493 is written "Jane beloved wife of Major James Slack." Late of the 63rd Regiment. For 12 years lived at Andrews farmhouse, moved to Green because of lack of water. A liberal County Councillor. Upset Headmaster 1892 by bursting in without "rapping" and smoking a cigar. Provided Daily Chronicle and B'ham Daily Argus to RR. Also others on loan. In 1893 he underlined articles in the Reynolds Newspaper. Vicar outvoted by 5 to 8 to allow paper again. Vicar had it banned on a point of club rules. Slack takes his papers elsewhere the following season. At same time although 3rd highest votes to be PC. he never served. Why? Supported Coal club and gave them a Fair day on the Green in June.

**ALFRED SMTH** (1841-1926) carpenter, builder and farmer m 1871 Elizabeth Page (1843-1920) G271. Son of Robert who built Cropredy and Bourton School. Owned several properties in Red Lion St. Retired from Holmleigh to 11 Red Lion St. with youngest daughter Elizabeth (1883-1944)G305. Eldest son Robert J.(1873-1933), Albert William (1875-) and Kate Margaret (1881-1920)teacher m1909 to J.H.Watkins. PC.1907. C of E. "A small quiet gentleman. He walked with his hands behind his back."

**JOHN SMTH** ( 1839-1920) Purchased 2 and 3 Chapel Row for £125 in 1881. His letterbox and post office window at No.3. Master shoemaker m. Mary E (1834-1898). Four sons with them 1881: Thomas 16, Abner 12 m.Grace Pargeter of no.9. Chapel Row. John H 10 and Arthur 7. John kept a donkey which had to pass through the house. Relieving Officer.

**ROBERT SMITH** (1873-1933) (Bertie) builder m Louisa Mary Burbridge in 1902 (1875-1960) G256. Teacher, niece of Mr Bonner, schoolmaster. Lived at Holmleigh after 12 Red Lion St. C of E. On various charities. Bellringer. CC&RR Comm. aged 20 to 34 partner with brother. Children: Norman (1903-1961) m. 1928 to Gertrude Godson, Evelyn Marjorie (1909) m 1933 to S.S.Pigott. Kathleen Mary (1912).

**ALFRED WILLIAM SMITH** (Willie)(1875- ) builder m 1905 to Lizzie Gardner Claridge. Two children survived Stella Margaret (1910-) Kenneth William (1914-). Worked as partner with Bertie until death of father. Left 12 Red Lion St. for Leamington. On CC&RR Comm. 18-32 with brother. C of E. Singer.

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**RICHARD SUMNER** (1853-1924) wheelwright and building business with Wm Neal. m Mary Ann Smith (1862-1943) of 3 Red Lion St. Three children: Frank ( 1891-1962) m Mabel Ellen Dunn ( 1895-1952), Elsie m Thos Wm Dunn lived at 1 Chapel Row. Annie (c1896-) m A.Cherry. Owned Nos 1 to 3 Chapel Row. Began as a carpenter on Wilscote estate (see's A. Pettifer Book 5 and C. Shirley's letters). Lived at Woodyard. Built Stoneleigh House in land belonging to 3 Red Lion St. PC.1913-1924. Member of Methodist Church.

**JOSEPH THAME** ( 1836-) shepherd from Fringford m Mary Ann Denton (1838- .Came via Berkshire to Upper Prescote. Children in 1881: George 15, Sarah Ann 11, John 9, Ellen 9, Charles 6. The last born at Prescote. Moved to Riverside cottages. John on CC&RR Comm. in 1905.

**THOMAS W Y. TIMMS** ( 1869-1933) railway in signal box. m Elizabeth Cooknell (1870- 1944) son Cyril ( 1894-) m Loie Howe. Good singer. In two concerts at Church Rooms 1906 and 7. Allotment. Member of pig club Comm. Hort. Soc Comm. Grandmother had a shop in Chapel Row. Lived Plantations, Chapel Green then 9 Chapel Row. PC.1925-1937. Son member of St Johns Ambulance with Denis Hickman and Colin Shirley.

**HENRY TOWNSEND** (1881-1917) m Florence (1884-1977) G.324. A gunner died of spinal meningitis while a soldier. 9th child of 16 born at Slatmill son of Matthew and Elizabeth nee Cherry. Three children: Henry, Grace (1913-) Mary (1917-1977). Lived at Poplar Cottages, then widow moved to Chapel Green.

**JAMES WARD** (1848-) from Culworth m Hannah ( 1841-1920),railway signalman. Came here via Bentley Heath and Great Bourton. Children1881 census: James 12, John, Elizabeth, Rose, Ellen, and Sarah who was born in Cropredy. Elsie?

**JOHN HENRY WATKINS** (1879-1961) G.306 farmer m Kate Margaret Smith (1881-1920) Teacher. Two children: Emily Margaret (1917-), Rosamund Kate ( 1919-). Mr Watkins moved to a farm in Kineton. A tall well built man. Kate a pupil teacher 1895-1899. Assistant teacher up to 1905. Her mother died 6 months after her own sudden death.

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**ALBERT WATTS** (1868-1951) G.339, m Eliza Bradley of Claydon (1867-1927).Three children baptised Church three at Chapel: Sidney Albert (1894-) blacksmith m Annie. Went to Canada and returned. Elsie Lily (1897-1966) m Marlow Gardner (1891-1970) C32. Fanny May (1899-) m Horace Armitt. Frank a bachelor, Alfred m Gertrude A.Pratt, William John (1905-) m Mabel Shepherd. On CC&RR Comm. when 20-29. Pig club secretary. He worked for McDougalls. His parents were Wm. and Mary Ann nee Cox. His brothers were Richard and Bill.

**RICHARD WATTS** (1866-1947) platelayer. m Mary Ann (1860-1948) G.323. Lived Rose Cottage. Member of pig club. Children: Thomas (1898- 1917) drowned in navy G 348 and War Memorial (see Pettifer Book3). Ethel May (1891-1940) m - Dodd G.348. Richard known for his roses.

**THOMAS A.WATTS** (- 1929) PC. 1925-1929. Singer .CC&RR Comm. Trustee member of pig club. Ran coal depot at station for Palmers. Lived in the thatched cottage in Chapel Row. He had trouble with his right leg which made him walk awkwardly. Daughter. Ruby m William Cherry.

**DANIEL WELLS** Snr(1843-1927) hurdlemaker m 1865 Ann Sophia Pargeter (1848-1926). Sons Daniel (1866) Henry (1870) he had land and milk round in B'ham and put stone G.513 for parents. Sarah Ann (1874) m Richard Garratt whose son Henry lived in Cropredy, Alwin, Cicely, Edith L., Ethel V and Olive. Daniel a chapel man. The family attended chapel services two or three times a day on a Sunday. If the children were reluctant to go in the evening he would say "Chapel or bed". Mrs Henry Garratt. He went to Chippy to do a job and stayed overnight at Mrs H.Garratt's mothers. They all liked him very much. Daniel Junior came visiting his sister Sarah, Henry Garratt's mother. Gertie Mold nee Pettifer used to watch old Daniel Wells making hurdles in Ankers barn.

**JOSEPH WILLIAMS** (Joey) (1850-1929). Came from Swerford. Cowman at Cropredy Lawn m. in 1877 Hannah Shirley (1848-) Three children: William (Henry?) (1878-1959)C.69. a gardener for Hadlands, millers. Edith (1880-1958) C.67. Bessie (1883-1950). One of the sisters was an invalid. Dressmakers living on in Father's cottage in Brasenose Cottages Station Road. Henry a singer. On CC&RR Comm. 1901. Left club by 1907.

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## Appendices.

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### Appendix 3

#### Details of Illustrations

1. Cropredy Green about 1910. Looking north towards High Street, with Thomas Cooknell's Shoe shop and corner garden to the left, next door to Harris's post office.
2. Mr T Cooknell and his second son William, aged 13 celebrating going into long trousers.
3. & 4. Mr Harris's garden shed, once the shoeshop. Note the windows and chimney. Inside it measured about 6.75 x 11.5 feet.
5. Hunt between 1904/5 and 1908. Outside Mr Bonham's Shop.
6. Hunt and corner of Green. Old part of Nose Inn, Constone's gable end the Smithy and Sumner's barn used as a building store.
7. Otter Hounds on Cropredy Bridge. "A very rare occasion" according to Mr Bonner on May 18th 1909 [School Log book]. Came down Cherwell, reaching bridge at noon. 20 pupils late back from the river.
8. Plantation Cottage built about 1677, Mr T Cooknell's home. Taken before 1914. Shared tap by gate.
9. Mrs Mary French nee Alexander outside Stonecote, Church Lane. Note side door to garden. Front door faced the Church Rooms on the west gable end. Already lost the thatch. 1920's?
10. Mrs Frank Sumner, Mrs H.R.Garratt, Mrs T Cooknell, and Mrs Tom Bradley. Jubilee in the Vicarage garden.
11. - 14. Mr Thomas Cooknell in 1931 by the pump room door and again on the cottage path. Widow Harriett Cooknell in 1949 by her front door and in the garden. Cherry's wall behind.
15. Between 1915-19 for the Hughes family moved in 1919 to Lyndhurst. Note the north field gate leading left to milk sheds.
16. Station looking towards Leamington. Signal box on left.
17. Green before 1908. Note no shed at Woodyard or PO.
18. Plantation Cottages with triangular green in front.
19. Plantation Road curving from old Vicarage gate up to triangular green, with Copes Cottages at the top. Cooknell's hidden behind Pettifer's. Note thatched rooves.
20. Cup and Saucer looking towards Goodrest. Note old edge of Green bank and trees. Also curved barn, once Constones.
21. Prescote Manor from farm yard 1910.
22. New milking parlour. Architect sent pictures to Richard Sumner dated 1910. Note the filled in arches.

23. Upper Yard 1910 with the roomy two cottages behind. Both yards were rebuilt in the 19th century and have some fine buildings. Two good examples of purpose built farmyards.

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