

## Second World War Memories

In 1940, I was 7 years old; I was evacuated from London to Hornton, with my sister Audrey, who was 5 years old. We arrived on Sumner's coach, which stopped outside the little general store that had a lovely bow window, on the wall outside was a chocolate machine, which I think cost one penny for a bar.

We were extremely lucky that the family who took us in were named Miles. The father was called Earnest, the son Arthur and daughter Gladys. Their home in Bell Street was a three-storey house named Jubilee House. We had the bedroom on the top floor, outside the bedroom on the landing apples and other fruits were stored. There wasn't any bathroom at that time, but there was a hipbath in the outhouse where a huge copper was used to heat the water which was pumped up from the well. The toilet was outside and to us was really primitive, as were the candles used to light us to bed.

We attended the village school; I learnt to sew and made myself a white bib top apron for use in the cookery class. I remember being praised for my darning, which I did on a darning mushroom!

I have so many happy memories of my childhood in Hornton, we would play in the sheds adjoining the house where the family business was run, Mr Jeffs would be in the smithy shoeing the horses, I loved watching him and can remember the smell even now. In the big workshop at the top of the garden, coffins were made, I was fascinated by them and the tools they used, and the boxes of black pitch used for lining the inside of the coffin.

Gladys was a wonderful surrogate mother to us, she did everything for us including teaching us to knit and even made clothes from hand me downs, we played with the children in the village because it was a close-knit community, you knew everyone from one end of village to the other. David Jarvis was one friend; he pumped the organ at Chapel for his father who was the organist, Olive Robins was another of my friends, I would go with her each day to collect the milk from her father's farm.

Mrs. Kate Turner ran the post office, the radio repair shop was owned by Mr. Roland Miles.

At Christmas we went carol singing around the village, carrying lanterns. In the summer we went on the Sunday school outing to various destinations, Wicksteed Park, Kettering, was just one. On a Sunday we would attend Sunday school in the morning, a Chapel service in the afternoon and then again in the evening. After the evening service on a summer's night, we would go for a walk along the country lanes.

Opposite Jubilee House was a big barn where sheep dipping took place. We regularly went looking for mushrooms and watercress in the fields near-by.

Our bother Alec was evacuated to the village in 1939, he lived with Polly and Norman Wheeler at the "Gables" the house next to the Red Lion pub. He learnt to drive Mr Sumner's 32-seater bus and also drove the tractors on the Wheelers farm, all before he was 14 years old.

Alec also recalls that large blocks of stone were taken to London for Lloyds Bank from the stone quarry at Edgehill. I remember when forces were mustering for D Day landings; we were amazed to see a succession of army tanks, armies, and jeeps with all their equipment driving through the village. They stayed in a nearby field, where we children were treated to chocolate and sweets from the soldiers who looked so smart in their uniforms.

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