

Growing up in Jordans

1936-1949

by

Judy Taylor



Growing Up in Jordans-1936-1949

My parents, Professor Arthur Newell and his wife Desiree, arrived in Jordans in 1934, with their two children Ricky aged 2 and Emmy aged 1. They had been looking for somewhere to live and came to a concert in the Village hall; they saw a 'To Let' sign in the hedge of Hawthorn Cottage, on the Green. The next day they came back and saw Fred Hancock in the Estate Office, and the cottage was theirs. They soon settled into village life and became very much part of the community. My father was American and pursued his interest in Anglo-American relations, establishing his own organisation called The Anglo-American Associates, based in London. He spent some of his time lecturing in England and the USA, helping them to understand each other. The rest of the time he went around, cap in hand, raising money and sponsorships for his work. He had a huge network of supporters and a wonderful rapport with people of all sorts.

My mother had been a professional musician, and was a very good violinist.

On one of father's trips to the USA, in 1936, he decided to take the family with him probably because Des was pregnant and he did not want to leave her alone. That is how I came to be born in Providence, Rhode Island. When I was 3 months old we all returned to England, sailing on the dazzling new Queen Mary and I arrived in Jordans, met by Wynard Wright- a bit more about him later.

When I was three, in 1939, we gave a home to an 18 year old Jewish refugee called Laura, from Germany. I don't know the story of her escape but she was one of the lucky ones to get out. She became our Mother's Help and because I was the baby of the family she adored me. She gave me a wonderful present, which she must have somehow brought with her. It was a musical clown, you pressed his tummy and he played a little tune. I loved him and called him Robert. Laura must have got a boyfriend, because my first ever visit to the cinema in Beaconsfield was going with them to see a rather unsuitable film, called 'All this and Heaven too'. It was about a husband having an affair with the governess and the little child dying of diphtheria! It left quite an impression and I can still remember a scene with them looking anxiously at him in bed. Laura left us after a couple of years. My father had connections in America and managed to enable her to join her brother in San Francisco.

Early days



Looking across to Green Lane West.



Early view of development around the wood and part of the Green



Des and Arthur Newell, on arrival in Jordans 1933



This photo of the green is from the Bucks Archives-c1934. We are sure it is Des, with toddlers Ricky and Emmy, heading for Hawthorn Cottage. The silver birch trees round the green are very small.



Des in her gypsy outfit!



On the village green, with Des, Emmy and Ricky; and watching the steam roller, mending the road.





The old brick works
at Three Households



Early Jordans, late 1920's or early
1930's. Folk dancing on the Green.
Centre back is the Ark.



Longdene School, often outdoors,
or large windows opened right out.



Maypole dancing, which I remember doing.



Emmy at Longdene, left, squinting into the sun



Phyllis Bligh's nursery school, which I
went to later. It was held at Longdene.

Hawthorn Cottage. We had the perfect cottage, looking out over the Green. It had 4 bedrooms, a bathroom, albeit rather pokey, a toilet downstairs, which you had to enter by first going outside and then coming in again from the back yard! My parents soon had a wall knocked down to avoid this inconvenience. The kitchen was small but adequate and still had the original wash boiler, with a little fire underneath to heat up the water. I don't actually remember my mother using it and it was later removed to make more storage space under the worktop. The Belfast sink (so fashionable now), had a wooden draining board, which my mother kept clean by pouring Hydrogen Peroxide over it. I loved to watch the grimy brown foam bubbling up. There must have been an old kitchen range but this too had been removed and in the little alcove left was a small boiler, which just heated the water-and of course the kitchen, which was the only really warm room in the house in winter. It could also be relied on to dry the tea towels and one's 'smalls' overnight.

My mother cooked on an old grey enamel cooker, with Queen Anne legs. It had one big square hot plate and one small one, which both took ages to heat up. How she cooked for all of us, especially at Christmas, with the small oven, I do not know. The cooker must already have been a period piece because Tenniel Evans, an actor who lived in the village, borrowed it for a television play!

Memories of the War.

I was just 3 years old when the war started so my memories are in the middle years-1942-5. Daddy, Ricky and I were classified as Aliens (American citizens) so we had to be registered and report regularly to the Police. Daddy got involved in helping Jewish families who had fled Germany- one family-the Loenings, lived in Long Redding in the wood. Eric Loening and another Jewish friend were interred and Daddy managed to get them released by vouching for them. Internment was the process of sending some aliens into custody at the start of the war, even if, as Jews, they had no sympathy for the Nazis. Internees could only get out if they were sponsored by someone and Daddy was able to do that. I think they were both on the Isle of Wight, another Camp was on the Isle of Man. Eric Loening became a senior scientist with Kodak, developing war equipment, which helped the war effort.

I was largely unaware of the horrors of the war but a few memories stand out. We were 25 miles from London but we could see the glow of the fires in the night sky during the blitz- the word used for the terrible bombing in London. I remember standing by the gate of Hawthorn Cottage, on a dark evening, in my pyjamas, while we all gazed in silence at the glow. There were also horrid

doodle bugs, automated flying bombs, which had timers and ticked as they flew overhead- and if that sinister tick stopped we knew we were in trouble. The nearest one to us landed in Welders lane, where there was a searchlight station. At night we could see the great streaks of lights as they scanned the skies. No one who heard it could ever forget the ghastly wail of the air raid warning, looping up and down. The 'all clear' was one continuous sound. There were very strict blackout rules and air raid wardens to make sure they were obeyed. We put black curtains on every window and sometimes we'd get a loud knock on the door and our fierce warden, Mr Pickstock, would shout- "Put that light out". At High March school we would have air raid drill practice and when the bell rang we would go and hide in our allotted space- mine was to crouch under the forms in the cloakroom and I can remember the smelly plimsoles! Fortunately, we never had to do it for real.

Many families had to take in an evacuee, from the bomb-stricken areas of London. A college friend of my mother's asked if we would take a boy called Alan, because he was learning the violin. I'm ashamed to say that I don't think we were very nice to him. The only memory I have is very vivid. Alan refused to eat his sardine skin and backbone. Ricky and I were astounded, as we used to squabble over who was to get these delicacies, when food was so short. Poor Alan must have been miserable in this strange family, but this little act of rebellion seemed like outright ingratitude to us. Fortunately for Alan he didn't stay long. Another effect of the war on us children of course was food rationing and we each had a ration book, with coupons for each type of food. I can't remember the exact amounts, but it was very little-for example only 2oz butter per person per week. You had to register with a grocer so of course we all registered with Mr Hughes at the village shop. He was a grumpy man but was completely incorruptible so no black market in Jordans, quite common elsewhere. (But Mr Hughes had a soft side- Ricky remembers him sending Joyce, his daughter, up on the day the Newell's arrived asking if they needed anything- they lived two doors down from us. The shop was much smaller then, and Granny used to complain about the flies in the shop window! I don't remember ever going hungry and you never saw an obese child in those days. The one thing I craved was sweets-perhaps the reason why I still love sweets so much. Our sweet ration soon disappeared, leaving a long wait till the next week. The only hope was a delivery of Mapleton's goods-they were a sort of latter day Suma- suppliers of vegetarian foods, including dried bananas, blocks of dates and special mixed dried fruit sandwich-with a pink or white cream filling. We loved those and when the word went around that the Mapleton van had been spotted we dashed down to the shop to buy what we could. The

dried bananas were good, though I never did get to like the dates-and still don't. The other things you could get without sweet coupons were those oblong cough sweets, which I discovered again in Morrison's not long ago! We were so desperate that we even bought cinnamon sticks to chew. When Daddy found out he forbade it, claiming it "dried up the red blood veins in your eyes!"-he used to lift up our eyelids to see if all was well. I can't imagine where he got this strange theory from.

We only went into Beaconsfield (or Beacy as we called it) for non-food items. I remember there was an early Sainsburys- quite a small shop. You had to queue to get to the counter, where your ham and bacon were individually cut to your required thickness on a machine with a large circular cutter. Biscuits were sold loose out of big square tins, under the front of the counter, and sugar was scooped into thick brown paper bags. As I remember it was just a deli type shop with everything at the counter. Mummy thought nothing of cycling down to Chalfont St Giles to the butcher. When you had made your purchases you were given a slip to take to the cashier, in her little box to pay the bill. Cycling home up the long hill must have been the worst part. Bread and vegetables were delivered to the door, as well as a fishmonger. You'll hear about them later on.

I remember the wonderful excitement on VE day- victory in Europe. A huge bonfire was lit in the field opposite the entrance to the village and almost the whole village must have walked down to watch it, with a euphoric sense of relief. The tragedy was that one Jordans family, the Harmons, lost a son weeks later in Japan because VJ day was not till the August.

At the end of the war all our family were invited to a garden party in London, in honour of General Eisenhower, who was receiving the freedom of the city of London for his contribution in the war effort. I think all American ex-pats must have been invited. I must have been about 8 and I can't remember much about it. But it seems I got lost in the crowds on the lawn and was finally found with Eisenhower himself squatting down and feeding me a doughnut!

In the war the village sponsored their own pigs, which lived in a sty in Joyce and Sylvia's vegetable garden. We all took our scraps to feed them and then the meat was shared out- a real treat.

Daddy's War work. He continued his lecturing with his British-American Associates (BAA). He was also employed by the BBC to give their response to the propaganda broadcasts by 'Lord Haw-Haw', who was a Brit, who had become one of Hitler's henchmen. Haw-Haw referred in his broadcasts to "that

man Newell"! so Daddy felt he was making his mark. Daddy was also asked to take part in the war time 'Brains Trust' with famous names such as J B Priestly. He also lectured to the Arms Forces on aspects of the war, such as the late entry of the USA after Pearl Harbour. He was involved in founding an organization called 'Books across the Sea'. Americans sent their books to us when the war meant they were in short supply. T S Elliot was involved in this and we have a letter from him to Arthur.

The Office of BAA was up in London and Daddy went on going up all through the war. (You always said "going up" to London-I never could understand why.) He never knew if he would go to his office one morning and find it had been flattened in the night. Fortunately he was lucky but bombs fell all around it. He took Emmy and Ricky up to see the bomb damage.

Letter to America, Christmas 1944 from Arthur to his father Elmer and other family members in Boston.

We found this letter in the box of archives in the loft at Hawthorne Cottage, after Des died in 1991. It gives a contemporary account of life during the last year of the war.

Dec 11th 1944

Hawthorn Cottage, Jordans

Dear Grandpa and everyone, we are all going to contribute to this letter. I'm afraid that during these last years we have too often felt the grimness of it all. But now the end is assured, though no man dares to breathe a date, spirits have lifted for that final steady pull to the tape.

I wish you all had a mental picture of our delectable village, in which our life is set. Grampa, you may remember when Des and I brought you here in 1930 to see the old Quaker Meeting House, and the Mayflower barn. None of us knew there was a snug village 200 yards up the road, tucked away in a cul-de-sac, where I'd live one day. Indeed, I used to come out here during WW1 for YMCA Conferences on Prisoners of war, staying at the Quaker Hostel. Our village didn't exist then! It was started in 1919, as a self-contained community, with village industries and crafts, but it went flooey when the depression hit England. So then the little rows of cottages, intended for the artisans, gardeners, brick makers and metalworkers were rented to other people, often with Quaker connections, who just wanted to live near London, with the handy railway station.

The war has brought back the plain living (and how!), but the high thinking, while still present in patches, has become a bit diluted by the Newell's and

their highly objectionable elements! At any rate Jordans has put up with us for over ten years.

When they built the village, they left a lovely open space in the centre for a village green, and the cottages and houses flank it. The Green has a cricket pitch, swings and sandpit for the children, and during the war cows and goats graze on it. The goats belong to Joyce Cook and Sylvia Brown, one a viola in one of Des's quartets, and the other a social worker. Known as 'the girls' they have gone into small holding with dogged British seriousness. Lately we have been getting yoghurt from them too, to the great benefit of our diet.

I rarely look out over the green without thinking of that last fortnight Toot was here, every day playing valiantly with all the evacuee children from London, teaching baseball to those strange forlorn, but noisy kids from the slums.

The high-brow Quaker architect who designed the rows of cottages had a fine classical eye for the easy exterior line, but, when it came to the interiors, his innate sense of British resistance to comfort' was given full play. Just as a little homely example of 'what would have been quite good enough for the dear artisans', there is but one lavatory in the cottage and that is downstairs.

Although an integral part of the building you could only get to it by going out to the garden and then into the lavatory from the outside! We had an inside door fitted by knocking a wall down so all is now well. But in spite of its minor inconveniences, we have a great fondness for it.

I am lingering on my account Jordans, not only because it is our family setting, but also because I believe it is rather typical of the small English community in war time. For it is a real community, with a life and flavour of its own. Though so near London, with many people going up and down every day to work, it is much more than a bedroom for London workers. It is off the main road, in the foothills of the Chilterns. In the evening, coming up from the railway station, I walk through our lovely beech wood that belongs to the village and can't be touched, and it's easy to imagine that the whole world has suddenly come under Quaker influence- until, say in 1941, you drew your blackout curtains and fastened the beaver- board window covers and heard the sirens go, first the distant ones and then the nearer, and finally our own private crop. The war then is still with you, in spite of the beech wood; you go to the door and hear it reverberate to the east, and see it in hundreds of red bursts as the anti-aircraft goes into action over London. Or it may be a raid in the Midlands or Liverpool, and the great formations of German planes roar over Jordans en route west. Our Wardens are on duty, patrolling the Green, but back in 1941

there were men in the German planes and they kept their bombs for better targets, so we had little damage nearby. Not so with the dehumanised flying bombs (doodle bugs). On the second night of that campaign, (which hadn't yet finished) Ricky and I, at half past ten, watched one pass directly over our house, about 50 feet up, with its strange rattling noise and spouting tail of fire. It went on, however, and a few minutes after (we learnt later) it had come down about 8 miles beyond us.

A feeling of community solidarity is inevitable. When we picked Jordans as a place to live, back in 1934, we hardly thought of its location in relation to bombing, but we couldn't have done better. Naturally we have all the war time services of air-raid wardens, volunteer fire brigades, first aid etc. But in addition, after the first few months, everybody found it necessary to change pace and get relief in something approaching normal pursuits. The alternative would have been a complete breakdown for a lot of people. And the British know how to keep their balance!

I think we have succeeded here in Jordans, as well as most. It's altogether healthy, not just escapism. We had our concerts- Griller Quartets, song recitals, Benjamin Britten (the current leading composer with weird modern harmonies). These are usually in the Mayflower barn, with the swallows swooping in and out over the beams. Our village hall is hopelessly inadequate, but we pack it out for lectures on war topics and post war problems. Then plays: like most places in this country there is a thriving village Dramatic Society and I must say they are very skilful in producing and acting first rate plays. There is even a Junior section which our children join.

Many of the Quakers have had to put aside their pacifist leanings during this war and the whole village has risen nobly to the various causes- 'Warship Week', 'Wings for Victory Week', 'Salute the Soldier Week' and last week it was the Merchant Navy. The children had to organise a charade- the word was mer-can-tile. White elephant and rummage sales are the most popular, because while you support the war effort, you may pick up something to fill gaps in your sadly depleted wardrobe or house furnishings. An egg is a prize to be auctioned off at a high price.

Jordans is, in one respect, not typical- it has no aristocracy, no church, no pub. To fill one of these gaps two retired teaching missionaries have organised a very fine Sunday School, which has become very popular. There's no squire with a lordly house, no servile hat doffing, such as I still see occasionally in more remote parts of the country, but is rapidly passing everywhere.

In our row of six cottages, on the village green, there is a spinster, who runs the local taxi, then the Newells, an evacuated family with husband away in the army, Mr Hughes, the shopkeeper, the Editor of a national Quaker magazine and at the end an old Jewish refugee couple from Germany.(I think he may have been embroidering this last entry to make his point!). We have all shades of political party opinions, with a fair sprinkling of ardent left wingers. Neighbours include John McMurray, one of our leading philosophers; Sir Frederick Ogilvie, former Director-general of the BBC; a former private secretary to Lloyd George; an old Lancashire lady, who was a founder of the Fabian Society and who Bernard Shaw took as his model for his Joan of Arc. So always plenty of interest to keep one's brain alert.

As you can imagine we have had a good many American soldiers visiting Jordans. It is a centre of American interest, and Des has organised a bunch of ladies here, who are ready, at a moment's notice, to entertain and show them around. It is an event if anyone but myself goes up to London for it can go now be damnably unpleasant in London, even now. At the height of the flying bomb business, it was a game of hide and seek almost all day. You did your work with one ear open for any sound of an engine in the air- it always meant a bomb. If it got louder you ran the middle of the room, away from the windows, got down on the floor and waited for the crash. My office was fortunate because our nearest hit was 50 yards down the street, and we only lost a couple of windows. Other times I was able to dash into a shelter.....

As a bi-product of my work I have been Chairman of the London International Assembly of London, which, for three years has held monthly meetings to formulate plans relating to post-war problems. Representatives from 22 Nations have taken part, including an excellent man from China. I took Ricky to one of their special meetings to welcome Andre Philip, the great French resistance leader, when he got out of France.

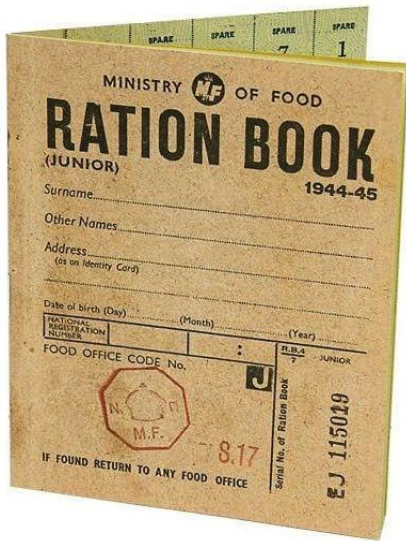
I try to involve the children in what I can, to bring them into closer touch with what is happening as a result of war and because of their double British American background, to understand the positive invasion of 'the yanks', after entering the war. One memorable day I took the whole family up to London, for the opening of the Washington Club on the Fourth of July two years ago. The opening was performed by the American Ambassador, John Winant, who I knew well, a very fine chap. All the military and naval big-wigs were there. Afterwards hot doughnuts and Coco Cola were served and in the melee I lost track of the youngsters, who were pursuing eats in their own way. Finally I caught sight of Judy's corn silk hair over in a corner, with two Officers squatting

down, having an animated conversation with her. I walked up to discover that her 'catch' consisted of Admiral Stark and General Eisenhower! She was telling them all about herself, where she was born, and where she lived. The General said "I made straight for the littlest girl in the room; it makes me feel like home". Whenever Judy sees his picture now she asks if that is her General! He made a great hit while he was in England and the Admiral is much loved by everyone.

But these weeks have been glorious holidays- just the kind of break we have both needed, especially for Des, after the incessant grind of a house, three perpetually hungry children and a husband who dashes in and out of the household at the most ungodly hours of day or night!"

Des contributed to the letter and gives some interesting details of coping with the rationing of food and clothes, and other inconveniences of war.

"I thought I would add a few purely domestic things- details you might like to know, such as food !! I do most of the shopping on my bicycle (like a tiger on the prowl) bringing back the booty in a very large basket, fixed on the front. There has always been enough food, but it's hard to avoid monotony, and we do long for oranges and other fruit. There is a certain amount of dates, figs and prunes, but they are just dates, figs and prunes till their dying day! Of course bananas disappeared early in the war- Judy doesn't even know what they look like. Unless you keep your own hens, eggs are practically a thing of the past, but we very much appreciate the packets of dried egg from America and Canada- they have been the cook's salvation. Actually the food front at Hawthorn Cottage is booming at the moment. We have in the house a very large turkey, which we ate hot last night with all the fixin's (except cranberry sauce) and which still represents several more feasts. An American friend of



Per month.
 Rent 15-4-8 }
 Groceries, salary 1-10 }
 Balance of the above: £2-10/- per week
 Meat 6
 Vegetables 6
 Fish 2
 Milk 6
 Groceries 1
 Extras 10
 (Laundry etc) £2-10/-

Des's careful budgeting



The milk tin looks familiar, started in the war, Dried eggs were not very nice!



Going to the Wembley Stadium for the 1948 Olympics to see the final of the 100m

EXETER GUILDHALL TO-NIGHT

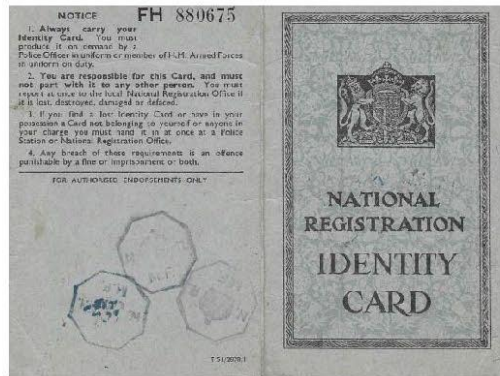
"This Man *Newell"

ON

"WHERE AMERICA STANDS TO-DAY"

*PROF. A. NEWELL,
*famous lecturer at
*American & British
Universities, who so
annoys Goebbels in
broadcasts to Ger-
many that "Haw
Haw" calls him
"THIS MAN
NEWELL."

**Tonight,
FRI.,
Jan. 2,
7 p.m.**



We all had to carry Identity Cards. Each family had a number, with the last digit indicating your place in age order. So I was DWAH 64-5

LONDON FORUM

the half-hour discussion programme
broadcast weekly in the OVERSEAS SERVICES of the BBC

No. 490

ALIENS (MOVEMENT RESTRICTION) ORDER, 1940.

The holder of this Registration Certificate No. NONE while registered with the Buckinghamshire Police District is hereby permitted—

(1) to have in his/her possession or under his/her control:
*a bicycle *motor vehicle No. FAC 990

(2) to be absent from his/her place of residence
(a) between p.m. and a.m. from
..... to
(b) between p.m. and 5 a.m. on
.....
provided that he/she is not out of doors between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m.

Signed [Signature]
Rank Police
Date 1/1/40

*Delete as necessary.



This is our 'wireless' where Daddy sat listening to all the latest news of the war. He is older in this picture but I remember him in this very place- always cigarette holder in his hand.

**FRIENDS HOUSE
LUNCH HOUR ADDRESSES
ON
PEACE and INTERNATIONALISM**

TUESDAYS, 1.20 to 2

At FRIENDS HOUSE, EUSTON ROAD, N.W.1
(Opposite Busby Station)

March & April, 1938

Tuesday, 29th. **PROFESSOR ARTHUR NEWELL, M.A.**
"WHAT AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE THINKING"
Professor Newell, former for the "Associate for Anglo-American Understanding", has just returned from U.S.A.

Tuesday, 1st April. **MRS GRACE LANKESTER**
"INDIA REVISITED"
Mrs Lankester was British Delegate to the All India Women's Conference at Nagpur.

Tuesday, 12th. **DR CECIL ROTH**
"THE JEWISH CONTRIBUTION TO CIVILISATION"
Dr Roth, Jewish Theologian, has recently published a book with the same title as this address.

THERE WILL BE NO MEETING ON TUESDAY, 19TH

Arthur's sent it from Scotland, as he sent one last year. In these days of rationing, when turkeys are about the ratio of one per thousand families wanting them, Howard Bird the American friend ranks as a fairy god father!

As far as our wardrobe is concerned, being frugal people we find the food coupons just about cover what we should buy in the ordinary way. But now that Richard is going away to school, it will be awfully difficult getting the school outfit, though I am waiting till after Christmas before I tackle that problem. Children's shoes are the hardest things to get, and of the poorest quality when you get them. Shoe menders have a very limited amount of leather, so it's only possible, occasionally, to get shoes mended. However, we manage somehow, and anyway nothing matters except the progress of the war, it's end, and making sure there's never another one.

In the house everything is wearing out and sadly shabby. The carpet in our living room is on its last threads, so to speak! I have to go round shaving it every so often. Chair covers can't be replaced and paint has disappeared. As I write the room looks charming, all the same. We have a lovely Christmas tree, and everywhere there are signs of the children- what more could be needed but that.

Arthur has been having a rest over Christmas and is all the better for it. He has been doing some work on the hedges (of which we have a lot) and he is a most excellent hedger. A few days ago he did lovely curves each side of the front gate- I feel this a prelude for peacocks and things! I'm afraid neither of us does much to the back garden. At the end is the garage, where the car has been patiently sitting since 1940, waiting for us to give it the sign to go again. The loss of the car has been one of our greatest handicaps and burdens – we depended on it so much, especially Arthur in all his work dashing about the countryside of England. I sometimes wonder how he survives all his long trips, waiting hours in railway stations in the winter, quite irregular meals, often standing most of a journey in a crowded corridor. But the reward comes with more and more recognition of his work from every quarter, high and low."

After the war Arthur went out to the Middle-East, lecturing there at the time of the Arab-Israeli settlement. He also became a regular with NATO and the Metropolitan Police College at Bramshill. His other regulars were Rotary Clubs and schools. His favourite Rotary club was Gloucester, and they took him to their heart and made him an honorary member. They liked the link with Gloucester Massachusetts, where Arthur had lived for a while. When he died

the Gloucester Rotarians put a plaque in his memory in the Cathedral, underneath the Rotarians flag.

Growing up in Jordans

I feel so fortunate to have grown up in Jordans and had a very happy childhood. I was 4 ½ years younger than Emmy, so I sometimes felt left out of their gang. Mummy wisely did not make them take me along, even though I longed to go. Once I was old enough to go out on my own I made my own friends.

I feel so privileged to have grown up in such an idyllic place. We were surrounded by so many wonderful Friends. I now realise just how special this was. It was like being in a big extended family, with so many remarkable Quakers and so much loving interest in all of us as we grew up. My earliest memory is of being in a cot in the bedroom at Hawthorn Cottage next to the bathroom. I must have outgrown it - they were always short of money so I was probably waiting for a proper bed. My feet stuck out of the end, through the bars, and Mummy used to tuck the blanket round them, as she kissed me goodnight! Perhaps it became a little jokey bedtime ritual. Later, in that same bedroom, I used to eat the plaster in the wall next to my bed. It started as a little hole in the wall. I can't think how but I discovered I liked the taste and grittiness of the plaster, so I used to lick my finger and rub it in the hole, which of course got bigger and bigger! I was mortified when the hole was finally discovered, and my secret revealed. I can remember feeling very embarrassed but not much of their reaction. I think Mummy was not so much angry as mystified. Years later I learnt that soil eating is quite common around the world, related to diet deficiency- so perhaps we were short of minerals in the austere war years.

Friends and childhood activities.

There were plenty of children in Jordans. Early on there was John and Jane Hamilton. Emma's contemporaries were Monica Harmon, Susan Shearer, and Eileen and Betty Hazel. There was a terrible scandal when Ferdie Hazel went off with another woman- unheard of in Jordans! I was part of a little foursome - Jenny Shearer (later Allen), Gilly Owen (Barratt), and Carole McClennan. Gilly and Carole's families had come to Jordans when the war started. Gilly's father, David Owen, was connected with the government and they knew Stafford Cripps. Later he was very influential in setting up the United Nations. When he



Her little baby is so sweet. She has dark hair, and tiny hands and feet, and she sleeps most of the time and I told her about Ricky and Emma and how they were going to see her soon, but she is too little to understand. I want you to help me to give her her first bath when we are all in Providence.

Born in Providence RI on 14th October 1936. Des's letter to Emmy and Ricky telling them about me!



LtoR: Joyce Cook, Ricky holding Peter, Mummy with me and Emmy in front, Vida Bates, mother's help

Back home from America to Hawthorn Cottage.



First birthday party. On L Dorothy Hamilton, with Jane and John, Susan Shearer., Emmy behind,(?) Bobby Fetter



All of us with Nana (Joyce Quarton, Basil's sister)



My first banana, the only one during the war.



Taken the same day- below with Laura Gilkerson, a Jewish refugee, who came to live with us in 1939



Des, in her gypsy outfit, before a concert.



With 'Granny Glendenning'- Jane Hamilton, Emmy, Betty Hazel, Madelaine Thorner, sitting in front, Judy, Jenny Shearer, Eileen Hazel.



With Mitze and one of her many kittens

was in New York, just after the war, he sent his wife Joyce some of the amazing new Nylon stockings and this caused a great stir. Carole lived in Fir Tree cottage, next door to us. Her father was an army Major, away in the war. Carol and I used to sit high up, opposite each other on the brick walls at the back of our cottages and play a game of 'telephones' using golden syrup tins and string. We also used to smuggle cigarettes out and try to see the red glow across the gap between the walls. Once all four of us planned a midnight feast out in the Shelter on the green. We duly met with our plundered food but it all went wrong when we were convinced there was a robber lurking and soon went running home in a panic! One long game-especially between me and Jenny was called 'Newshers Farm'- a mix of our two surnames- Newell and Shearer. The whole village was our farm-the stables by the shop, in some flowering current bushes at the side. When I smell that tom cat scent it takes me right back to getting our sticks, as horses, saddled up and off we would go galloping to the wood, where the pigsty was, etc. Under the lovely tall beech trunks were dense holly bushes, which made perfect dens, or cowsheds. On one occasion, during the war, there must have been an army exercise in crutches wood, and I remember the horror of going into one of the holly bushes and finding it had been used as a toilet by the soldiers, with great piles of turds everywhere. One of the delights of Crutches wood was the wonderful beech tree's spread of roots, and we imagined the little pools and caves they made as fairy palaces.

Once we put on a play, using one of the dells in the wood. These dells had been created when the village had excavated the clay for use in building the Village in the 1920's- only 20 years before. The one we used for the play still had steps cut out around the edge, ideal for seating. Those involved, as well as the 4 of us, included Madeleine Thorner, Susan Hayman, Christopher Lawson, and Rosalind Polge. The audience consisted of our families and friends. The money we raised was for Dr Barnardo's. We all had their little collecting boxes in the shape of a Cottage. We also raised money for them by having a stall outside our cottage on the green and selling things we had made- I can't remember what, but we successfully waylaid kindly village people on their way down to the shop.

The summers always seemed long and hot and we were free to roam, often in just a pair of puffed knickers and Clark's sandals. The Shearers had a cherry plum tree in their garden, quite a big tree. Jenny and I used to climb up into it and gorge ourselves. After one such occasion I came out in an impressive rash.

Dr Grace, our GP, was called and she diagnosed it at once as a strawberry rash. I had to confess at eating so many cherry plums! Once, when I was on my fairy cycle, peddling madly down the road past Hawthorn cottage, I went over the handlebars and was knocked out. I woke up in a makeshift bed at the end of my parent's double bed, with my anxious mother peering down. I slept in there for several nights. My head had bled so much and no one had noticed a gash on my elbow, leaving a scar to this day. The winter of 1947 was exceptionally cold and we had heavy snow falls when we couldn't go to school. We took our sledges into Chalky Field and further afield to the Golf Course by the station.

In the summer we used to earn a little money by picking cherries in the orchard behind Old Jordans. The ladders were very tall and went from narrow at the top down to splayed bottom rungs of about 4 or 5 feet. The cherries were 'white heart', big cream coloured with a blush of red. When you bit them they made a lovely crunch. They sold for 6 pence a lb. Now in the shops each cherry probably costs more than that.

Growing up in Jordans we were allowed a remarkable degree of freedom. I used to be allowed to cycle, with the older ones, to **Burnham Beeches and Cookham**. There was a big outdoor swimming pool among the trees at Burnham Beeches, with little changing cubicles all around the edge, as well as the old hollow trees to climb. At Cookham we would be out all day, hiring punts and seeing how near to the weir we could get. Then we would find a quiet spot to tie up, have a picnic and swim. We would also go up onto Hodgemoor, beyond Seer Green. Seer Green itself was avoided because of the fearsome reputation of the Seer Green boys! They would occasionally send possies and come rushing down into Crutches wood- word would be passed around that they had been spotted. I think I kept well away and I don't know if there were actually any 'battles'.

One of our favourite places to go was the **Bluebell woods**, up behind the Meeting House and towards Goldhill Common. There were indeed bluebells, as well as primroses and, lying on the grass, you could smell the thyme and hear the bees buzz as they flew past. At the end of the walk you had to cross the railway line just near Potkilm Lane bridge. We used to take pennies specially so that we could place them on the railway lines, stand back and wait for the next train. The delight in finding the great big squashed discs never lost its thrill though now I realise how dangerous it was.

Mummy and Nan Miller also ran a **Children's Orchestra**, which rehearsed in the Village Hall. I was allocated the percussion, as I didn't play a 'proper'

instrument. The piece we were very good at was Percy Grainger's 'Mock Morris'. Tess Miller became a famous oboists.

There were other more organised activities too. The Jordans Village Players put on plays, and occasionally one specially for children-the main one I remember was 'Make Believe' –most of us were in it -Ricky and Emmy and even I had a small part, with Jenny and Sue Shearer, Monica Harmon, Eileen and Betty Hazel.... Eileen Vernon and Paul Reichmann were the leading lights in Jordans Players, and also Libby Vance.

When I was quite small I had a favourite game playing 'schools'. I would spread out all my soft toys and dolls in a row behind Daddy's big arm chair and in front of each of them I would place their exercise book-I'd made miniature ones with special pictures and lessons for them to do. Daddy loved to hear me talking to them, telling them off etc and was convinced I would be a teacher one day. (In fact, I became a social worker.) On another occasion I spent weeks making an entire model village out of clay- cottages, school and shop; and then, when the had hardened I painted them. (You could dig the clay straight from the ground, where the old clay workings had been. This is now Puers Field - at first just known as 'the flats'. When I went for my clay you could still see the narrow railway lines, for the trucks they would have used). I was never a good reader and was happier making things. My favourite stuffed animals were Toddy-a war time bear who could only have furry paws, head and feet as all materials were in short supply but I loved him.



Before the French doors.



Snow of 1947, in Chalkey Field pond with Jenny Shearer at the front.



At Porth Melgan, St David's- a rare glimpse of Daddy in his woollen Bathing costume!

And here we are in St David's car Park-our second Vauxhall, after the war, following FLC 970.





Judy and Rachel Gibb



Daddy was often away on lecture tours, or on longer trips to the USA. Des always missed him and longed for his return-this is what telegrams looked like-the quickest way to send information. They had to be delivered by a Telegram boy, who expected a tip. In the war people dreaded them as it could mean a loved one lost in battle.

Charges to pay _____ s. _____ d.
 RECEIVED

POST OFFICE
TELEGRAM

No. OFFICE STAMP
 504

Prepaid. Time handed in. Office of Origin and Service Instructions. Words.

At _____ m **44**

From *** 244 2.00 BERRARDSCROSS 16**

By _____

PROFESSOR NEWELL BARTON CLASS THREE ELIZABETH
SOUTHAMPTON DOCKS

WEATHER IMPROVING ARRIVING DOCK ELEVEN O'CLOCK

ALL LOVE * *

For free repetition of doubtful words telephone "TELEGRAMS ENQUIRY" or call, with this form at office of delivery. Other enquiries should be accompanied by this form, and, if possible, the envelope. B or C

Everyday Life in the 1940's

Our life was so much less complicated then. You were lucky if your family even had a telephone; we did have one and our telephone number was 3159. There was no STD, but a network of telephone Exchanges, manned by a long line of telephone operators. It was not always possible for them to put you straight through and they had to find a route, through other exchanges. They often said "Trying to connect you". There were many more telephone boxes in those days. They worked on a system of buttons. When you got through to the operator she asked you to put the money in. When you were connected you pressed button A. If the call failed you could press button B to get your money back. It was always worth seeing if someone had forgotten to press button B!

If you wanted an urgent message there were no Mobile phones and the best way was to send a telegram. The words were printed out on a long strip, in capitals, and stuck on the telegram sheet. When they arrived there was always a frizzante of panic in case it was bad news; in the war it often was. They had special ones for weddings or celebrations. At our wedding all the telegrams were read out.

There were no washing machines. The cottages used to have wash boilers. You had to light the little fire under the big hollow bowl on top. The water heated and you moved the clothes round with a stick. Then you had to transfer the washing to the sink to rinse it. Some people had wringers. As I said I can't ever remember my mother going through all this. She did some handwashing, with Oxydol, (an early detergent) or Lux flakes for the woollies. The rest she sent to the laundry, even though we were hard up, mainly Daddy's shirts and collars, and bed linen. It all came back beautifully packed in a very strong cardboard box. Everything had to have laundry marks and there was trouble if things went missing.

There were no PC's or word processors. Daddy had to write speeches and letters on an ancient old typewriter, which clattered along, and then the sweep of the shift down to the next line. No photocopiers either so if he wanted extra copies he had to put a layer of carbon paper behind the top copy and roll it all on together. Three copies was about the limit and the third one was very faint.

An exciting event was re-surfacing the roads- an early photo shows Emmy and Ricky watching the big steam roller. It was quite an event because rarely done. - roads were not high priority in the war effort. But Ricky remembers villagers

repairing pot holes with a watering can of thick black tar, and a barrow of stones to throw over afterwards. In hot weather the tar bubbled through the stones and we would come in, our bare feet covered in tar. We were sat on the draining board, and the turpentine was got out to remove it, tickling our feet.

Christmas in Jordans was lovely. Ferdi Hazel organised carol singing. We went to their house to practice and this is where I first heard special carols- our favourites were 'O Little one sweet', 'Past three o'clock', 'Lully Lullay' and Ding Dong merrily'. We sang all around the village and ended up on the village green singing round the Christmas tree next to the estate office, (later the tree was one which we had donated- we had bought a tree with a root to dig up each year, but it finally got too big to bring into the house.) Another village tradition was the Carol Roll Service in the village hall. It had carols and readings but the main focus was welcoming any new babies born that year onto the scroll. This was unwound and revealed a beautiful picture at the top with Jesus surrounded by little children, and a list of all Jordans' babies underneath. I loved it.

We never saw our Christmas tree till Christmas morning, and it was magical to come down and find it glittering in the corner of the dining room. Mummy and Daddy had decorated it on Christmas Eve. I can't remember ever having a stocking but one very special year I woke to find a miniature artificial tree by my bed, with tiny dolls house dolls on it, ones with wire bendy legs and little metal feet. I was thrilled. Presents were very modest, as we had so little money. On Christmas morning Daddy made no concession for his breakfast routine, getting up late as usual, while was waited impatiently poking at the presents under the tree. When he was finally ready to start he insisted on undoing all the knots on a parcel, the ones which had arrived by post, to save the string, even winding it up into little twirls before taking the brown paper off. Every year we had a parcel from a young German called Rolf Loukes. His father had been a prisoner of war at Wilton Park, a rehab centre, with which Daddy was involved. Rolf was so grateful for what Daddy had done for his father that he sent us a huge parcel every year full of biscuits, sweets, and little soft iced spicy cookies. I didn't like them very much but that didn't take away from the excitement of the unwrapping. We always gathered round the 'wireless' at 3 o'clock to listen to the King's message and I think Kings College Carols were already broadcast.

Music memories . Our childhood was full of music -Mummy practising in the dining room, I particularly remember the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto. We had to listen to a lot of Mummy's violin pupils too- not always a pleasant

sound! I think she must have been rather a fierce teacher. She led the semi-professional local Misbourne Orchestra. The rather poor photo of her playing, before a concert in the village hall, captures the way her whole body seemed to be part of the violin and the music, as she swayed and dipped. She is wearing her gypsy ensemble for the Gypsy rondo! She played with various chamber music ensembles. We also used to go down to Long Redding in the wood, where Eric and Lilli Loening lived with their son Ulrich. Eric played the 'cello, and Lilli played the piano. They were not really up to Mummy's standard but she was so fond of them and they loved it so much when she went down and did piano trios. I can remember going down too and sitting and listening. Although I got rather bored by the end, the sound of chamber music became distilled in my being and now trios and quartets that I thought I'd never heard bring those days back so vividly. Her rather more professional music making involved some of her college friends, including Gerald Finzi.

Daddy loved music too but he couldn't read music and had never had a music lesson in his life. However, he had the wonderful gift of being able to go to the piano and play anything from memory- he had a perfect ear in just one key, something like C sharp! The moment we waited for at Christmas was the Kings College carols and Willcocks setting of 'O Come All Ye faithful' and the wonderful chord in the unison last verse. It would bring tears to his eyes and as soon as the service was over he would get up and go into the dining room and sit at the piano and play that verse with the perfect harmony and chords. It still brings tears to my eyes every time I hear it.

In my teens, home for the holidays, I used to hear Mummy draw the dining room curtains- a special noise with metal rails; while she waited for us to come down for breakfast she would start playing some of the lovely Brahms intermezzi on the piano. The sound drifted up to me lying so happy and safe under the blankets.

Jordans Music Club was founded in the war by Joyce and Sylvia, and the President was Reginald Jacques, a well-known conductor and musician. The concerts were held in the Mayflower barn, a lovely setting. The big barn doors had to be kept open so that the swallows could fly in and out. Joyce had another College friend who worked for an Agency in London and she would recommend up and coming young musicians. We had some remarkable artistes including Rosalind Turech, and the Amadeus String Quartet, just setting out on their careers. They loved coming so much that they would come again and again, at their original fee! My mother was on the Committee so concert days were always a bit fraught.

I remember one very vividly because Jenny and I had gone off for a walk and met a man in the field opposite the Meeting House, below Chalky Field. He stopped his bike and leant over the gate, began chatting and came in and joined us. We all sat on the grass—he lay on his back and gave us rides up in the air with his knees- all very innocent on our part and we were enjoying it and lost track of time. However, by now the whole village was out looking for us and our Mothers were in a panic. I think in the end we just wandered in and wondered what all the fuss was about. Mummy was beside herself with worry and having to get ready for the concert- she didn't know whether to be angry or relieved. Later, as a mother myself, I knew that feeling well.

In the interval of the concerts the audience would have refreshments from the refectory and stand out in the pleasant hostel gardens. The refectory had been made from the old stables. Old Jordans was a historical building, a farm where a Quaker family lived in the early days of persecution. It was bought by The Society of Friends, I think in the early 1900s. It became a Guest House and we always called it the Hostel. The Refectory and Barn made a wonderful venue for special Celebrations, especially weddings. Both Emma and I used it for our wedding receptions. And also Kate and Andy, where we all walked up from the Meeting House. How sad that this is no longer possible.

Talking of Emma and Gresham's wedding- they actually met when Gresham came for violin lessons with Des. But their courtship flourished during baseball on the green in the early 1950's.

Village people.

We were surrounded by some wonderful Quakers, families who were involved in the very start of Jordans Village- like **Jim and Eileen Cavett**, who lived at the back of us on the edge of the wood. They were so loving and gentle, and we were always welcomed if we popped in. Jim used to let us sit very quietly while he waited for his robins to come and eat out of his hand, on their logia.

We knew if we fell and grazed a knee we could go to any house, would be sat down with a drink and our graze would have Germolene applied to it! It was like a big extended family. Then there were the **Polges**. Mrs Polge was Eileen Cavett's sister. The Polge's ran a farm out on Twitchell's Lane and Rosalind, known as Moppet, was our age, though we didn't play with her a lot as she was just outside the village.

Fred Hancock was the village secretary- he could be rather fierce but we liked him-he occupied the little Estate office by the swings and kept a beady eye on us when we were on the swings and see-saw. The village plumber was Bert

Ryan and the electrician was **Tony Slade**. **Mr Grey** did the decorating for the village- a lovely man with a big smile. He reminded me of Millie Molly Mandy's Grandfather. **Arthur Douglas**, and later his son Hubert were like village caretakers, and would appear to sort out odd jobs on the properties. Ricky remembers Arthur as having a dry wit. He was talking about a Dachshund and Arthur said, with a straight face, " he used to be a Labrador but got caught in my mowing machine!"

Joyce Cook and Sylvia Brown were very much part of our lives- Joyce had been at the Royal College of Music with Mummy so they were old friends. Joyce and Sylvia lived in Chelsey Cottage and ran a little market garden. They kept goats and used to make what they called cheese. To me it just seemed to be sour goats milk strained through an old stocking and hung on a beam in their lovely big kitchen. I loved their house but I hated the goats cheese. Perhaps why I never have liked it.

Joyce played the violin (rather badly according to Granny!) Looking back I'm pretty sure she and Sylvia were 'an item' as we would now say, but I knew nothing of these things and we just accepted them as good friends. (However, a lot of women lived together at that time, and were not necessarily lesbians, because so many women lost their husbands or sweethearts in WW1 and sadly there were not enough men to go round.) Joyce taught me the piano and I had to go their house and used their lovely grand piano. I remember there was a big Fuchsia bush by the front door. I rang the bell, which was a real bell dangling down. I used to see how many big fat Fuchsia buds I could pop before Joyce appeared. I blame Joyce for my poor piano playing. She allowed me to look at my hands so I never learnt to sight read. I had a good ear and could play things from memory but of course when I went wrong I hadn't a clue where I was on the page.

I can't leave Joyce and Sylvia without mentioning their Christmas parties, which were a regular part of our Christmas. We would sit in their lovely big sitting room. There was usually a charade, and a number of pencil and paper games. One was remembering items on a tray. Another was going round with each of us giving a category, such as town, river, girl's name, composer etc ; then a letter would be chosen and we had to think of something starting with that letter for each category. You only got a point if no one else has thought of it. As we were leaving the party one year I remember sitting on Daddy's shoulder (so I must have been under 6 years old), I said in my best polite way 'thank you for having me' and everyone laughed, at which point I burst into tears!

The **Moralee** family were a colourful family and full of Irish charm. Later George Moralee, the father, used to go up to Blaen-y-Cwm with Gresham Dodd, to remake each window in turn. George used to take his pet fox with him.

I'll say a bit more about Wynyard. His full name was Frank **Wynyard- Wright**, but he was always known as just Wynyard. He lived in St David's- a few doors down from us. He was very supportive of my father's work and was a family friend. He gave the speech at my wedding. He had a wonderful dry wit, rather like Gilbert Harding, a BBC personality at that time, for those of you who remember him. Wynyard used to send us post cards, always finding hideous ones of unedifying views of gas works, motorways and the like. He marked them Number 24 in the Beautiful Britain Series! He later moved to a large house near Burnham Beeches, where he ran a small school for boys.

A very special couple were Miss Ethel Moore and Miss Mary Hankinson (they were known as Moore and Hanky). Mary had been a fine actress and Bernard Shaw had written the part of Joan with her in mind. They kept an animal sanctuary in their house-the one on the left hand corner as you enter the village. They took in any little creature- like a bird with a broken wing. We used to be allowed to go and see them- rooms filled with cages and always a very strong smell. I remember Miss Moore sitting in her back garden, tenderly stroking a cockerel. One of the highlights of the New Year's Eve party in the village hall was a performance by Moore and Hanky reciting a poem, where every verse ended with the phrase "And the Goblins will get YOU if you don't watch out". We loved it and it always got a rapturous applause

Wilfred Bligh. Another Jordans character who came to the door was Wilfred Bligh. He and Phyllis lived down in the wood and he grew vegetables, which he brought round in his car-almost invariably arriving just as we were sitting down for a meal, bringing mutters from Mummy. Wilfred was rather wild looking with long unruly white hair and shabby trousers. He did some lovely etchings of the village, meeting house and area. And he always had just for us some special offer Phyllis taught me in the kindergarten at Long Dene and later ran a Nursery in the village.

Margaret and Arthur Haywood were stalwart Quakers and lived just behind us. They had a huge Great Dane called Celia. One day Arthur came to the door, and for some reason a £5 note was being handed over. There was a sudden commotion- the cat had appeared, and Celia had gone mad! But when it had all calmed down, the £5 note had vanished. It was decided that Celia must

have swallowed it! The Haywood's daughter was called Anne, and she soon rebelled against her strict Quaker upbringing, and must have caused her parents much heart ache with boyfriends, staying out late etc. She eventually married Keith England, but the marriage did not last long.

Miss Crook and Eva King were our neighbours at. Eva was a lovely gentle woman but Miss Crook could be very fierce. She ran a taxi service for the village and was well known for her erratic driving; she would sit low in the drivers seat, and it was hard to think she could see where she was going. As you leave the village there is a blind corner to the left but Miss Crook sailed across without a glance! She also seemed to be the self appointed protector of the Chestnut tree on the corner by her cottage, and if she caught us climbing it she would come storming out shouting at us.

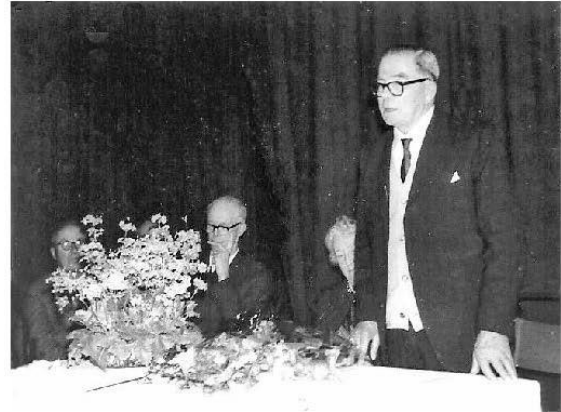
Miss Crook must have met Daddy, with her taxi, many a time, back late from his London Office.

Elgiva and Esther Edmunds and The Ark. Elgiva and Esther were sisters who lived at Wyoming (the house above Owlswick). Elgiva was a Probation Officer in High Wycombe and several of her clients landed up coming to The Ark. This is the house next to the Village shop. I don't know its history. It was well established when I was growing up and was a Children's Home. Mrs Omerod and Miss Stein (?)-not sure if I remember it- ran it, with various house mothers. Elgiva was passionate about her work, very outspoken but with a heart of gold. She and Esther were related to the Fiennes family in Banbury, and the explorer Ralph Fiennes. The family came from Banbury and the 'Fine lady on a white horse' was a Fiennes lady.

Village People



'Ethel Moore & Mary Hankinson' in their garden, Ethel holding a wounded chicken



Fred Hancock



Keith England, taken in 1970, but he never seemed to change



Elgiva Edmonds



Left, Miss Crook, Taxi



Mr Hughes Shopkeeper & one storey village shop



Mrs Wheen had a small holding up where the village school was built. She had immigrated from Australia and was a weather beaten, wiry figure, of few words. We were a bit wary of her. She had a beautiful daughter Gretchen. I don't remember seeing a husband but apparently he worked away a lot. Mrs Wheen kept Chickens and we were sent up to buy her eggs. She also had cows and goats. The cows were tethered on the verges around the village and they got very aggressive and skittish if we got too close. Mrs Wheen was convinced we teased them. I think we did sometimes, seeing how close we could get before they charged! During the war she was allowed to take the hay from the village green, when every possible crop had to be used. Essential imported food had to come in by a convoy of ships, protected by our submarines but sometimes the German U boats would sink a whole convoy. So we had to grow all we could. The grass on the Village green was allowed to grow tall and then made into hay. Mrs Wheen was allowed to harvest it. The long grass provided us with hours of pleasure. All through the long summers we used to have a wonderful time making tunnels and hidden dens. The hay seemed to be higher than me, and certainly would have been high enough for us not to be seen if we went on all fours.

Fortunately, none of us suffered from hay fever. Hay making was very exciting. First it was cut, I think with a tractor and cutters. Then it was made into stooks, with armfuls gathered and several bundles standing up together to dry. A few days later a big hay cart was loaded, the stacks passed up on long pitch forks. If we were lucky Mrs Wheen would allow to ride back sitting atop the hay.

Keith England. Keith lived at 'Langdale', on the Green, with his second wife Hilda and two children. He was a real man of the soil and grew all his own vegetables. He had a calm, laid back manner. We enjoyed his company, following him around with his wheel barrow, and being allowed to dig up potatoe.

Some of the cottages were let and other plots were sold to Friends to build their own houses. These private houses have now of course become worth millions, with their horrid security gates, and as they changed hands the character of the village has inevitably changed, with far fewer Quakers. Now there is a long waiting list for the cottages and applicants must have a strong connection with the village.

Tradesmen. My sister, Emma Dodd, wrote lovely accounts of some of the Tradesmen who visited the village, and I will include them here. She writes so well.

“Calling Tradesmen in Jordans_(1930’s to 50’s)

Mr Bail was dapper-he fancied himself. He came around with a fruit and vegetable van. His dark hair was so well slicked back with ‘Brylcream’ that you could see daylight through the comb lines. He wore a fawn, double breasted gabardine raincoat, tightly belted, and a Clark Gable tooth brush moustache, and a rather ingratiatingly soft voice. He came to the front door to take the order from my mother, taking a stub of pencil from behind his ear and writing on a small note pad of cheap paper. We crowded to my mother’s side to drink in the proceedings. My mother might ask “what are the sprouts like today?” and Mr Bail would always reply “very nice sprouts”. Whatever the item was it was always “very nice”. Mr Bail’s big tall van, with double doors opening at the back and steps up into it was like a mall shop with all the fruit and vegetables in boxes on shelves .He had old fashioned scales with heavy iron weights on one side and a deep brass, earthy scale pan on the other. In the winter it had an electric light bulb rigged up, and glowed with colour as he weighed up the order and put it all together in a cardboard box. The smells were vivid; celery, onions, cabbage, oranges, bananas, apples, with an undertone of earth and fields.

Mr Dickinson brought fish in a small black Morris van with doors opening at the back- a much smaller affair than Mr Bail’s bigger van. My mother came out to the van to view the fish in its flat wooden boxes. She carried an old chine dinner plate to put the fish on when she had bought it. Mr Dickinson was just a bit frightening. He was a big rather sombre man with a long, thick, navy blue serge apron stretched across his stomach, the bib part of which was buttoned up onto the button of an overall which he wore underneath. The black tapes of the apron were tied at the front in a bow. There were fish scales everywhere; sticking to the front of the navy blue apron, on the silver scale pan from the scales in the back of the van, and on Mr Dickinson’s fat fingers, which made his hand look more like a paw than a hand as he gutted, filleted and skinned the pieces of fish, lifting it with clumsy, flopping movements, from the scale pan onto the plate. In cold weather he wore dark blue, hand knitted mittens, which of course gathered their share of shiny fish scales too. The inside of the van was painted white, and that along with the white and grey of the fish, the pale

wooden boxes and the shiny scale pan gave a lightness and a brightness to the inside of the little van. Mr Dickinson had a set of thin, long bladed knives with black handles and he sliced the fish with long, skilful sideways movements, working the fillets away from the back-bone. I liked the fresh smell of the fish; almost like being at the sea. And even the coppers given to my mother in change had a fishy smell clinging to them.

The Kleen-e-zee Man came only occasionally, lugging his heavy, battered black suitcase up the garden path and kneeling down to open it on our red tiled porch and deftly and quickly spreading out some items out with his friendly, smiling patter to tempt my mother. He carried brushes, hard and soft, mop heads smelling of new cotton, stiff nail brushes, bright yellow soft dusters, tins of polish, cotton household gloves, washing up mops with white fluffy heads and slim wooden handles, shoe cleaning brushes and even brooms with long handles. A fresh clean smell of polish, new wood and bristles came flooding out of the suitcase. My mother always bought something as she liked to support the Kleen-e-zee man and the things were of very good quality. My father would come out to chat as well because the Kleen-e-zee business had started in America, where he came from. The Kleen-e-zee man knelt on one knee proclaiming his wares like the leading man in an opera. He would pack his suitcase again fixing the heavy clasp and brown handles over his shoulder, and would depart up the garden path in his cheap, dark, rather shiny suit, a smart young man was important for business.

Mr Lofty came from Seer Green with freshly baked bread in an enormous, strongly woven wicker basket over his arm. The bread, crusty brown and white, had a wonderfully wholesome and delicious smell, and was decorously covered with a clean, white tea towel, with red stripes down each side. Mr Lofty wore a fawn twill overall with whit buttons down the front, which could be removed for washing as they had a metal loop at the back, through which a sort of metal sprung pin fixed it to the back of the material. Mr Lofty had a stout, flat leather money-satchel cross ways over his chest. The leather strap to close it was securely fixed with a little flat brass knob, which turned against a small brass backing plate. He dug his hand into the satchel, shaking it to bring up the coppers for change. Big brown pennies, half-pennies and the even smaller farthings with the little wren stamped on them. He was a quiet, friendly grey-haired man.”

I will add my own memory of **Mr Lofty**. He used to bring his bread van to do deliveries around the village. Sometimes he would let me and Jenny ride in the back, with the bread, and give us loaves to take to the doors. Once we were doing a delivery round the wood, where a long path went down to each house. As we got back into the van, between each house, we couldn't resist the smell and taste- of the crusty loaves and began initially to tear off tiny bits of loose crust –just to tidy up the loaf! Soon, however, we realised that there was a gaping hole and knew we would be discovered. We made a dash for it, telling nice Mr Lofty that we had to go home and hid the loaf under our coat. We felt so ashamed and whether we told our mothers or they found out I'm not sure but anyway we were made to pay for the loaf and apologise to Mr Lofty. Our worst punishment was never again feeling able to go on those pleasant bread rounds- Mr Lofty was kind enough probably to have had us back but we hadn't the face.

I have a vivid memory of **an Ice Cream man** coming on a bike- probably after the war. He had a big insulated box at the front of the bike and when he opened the lid the smell was lovely. I can only remember him having one sort and this was a cube shaped block of vanilla, which did our family as a treat. When I grew up you could still buy ice cream blocks but they were brick shaped and when I scraped the last bit of ice cream off the cardboard it took me right back to the ice cream man.

We even had a **dressmaker**, in spite of the fact that we were always so hard up- though we didn't realise that. The dressmaker was in Beaconsfield, and I remember she once made Emmy and me matching dresses-the same material but Em's was in blues and mine in pinks. They had matching puffed knickers with a little pocket for your hanky. I loved mine and then of course as I grew I got to wear Em's as a hand me down. The other expense, before the NHS, was going to the **dentist**. During the war most dentists were called up to be army dentists so we had to go up to London to a dentist on Queen Anne Street. The reward for being good was to go to Selfridges afterwards and have a Knickerbocker Glory, sitting perched on a high stool. We would also sometimes go into D H Evans and buy sandals-always Clark's or Startrite. I loved putting my foot on the X-ray machine to be measured and seeing all the bones in my foot. This practise was thrown out due to radiation risks.

After the war we went to Mr Venning, a dentist in Gerrards Cross, and I used to cycle over on my own. There were always Rupert Annuals and copies of Punch and that awful smell and the sound of the drill as you waited-some things never change!

Special village events. The one I remember most fondly is the **New Year's Eve** party. This party was at the very heart of the spirit of village life- a wonderfully warm, homespun evening with every one doing a 'turn', always a charade, singing, skits etc. The village hall was packed out and plenty to eat. I was so excited the first year I was allowed to stay up for it- I suppose about 8 years old. I believe the party has not been held for many years sadly. Another Annual event was the **Tenant Members Supper**-perhaps this is still held. There was also the **Flower and Vegetable Show** in September, held in the village hall, with long trestle tables full of produce. It was quite a competitive affair waiting to see who had won most prizes, or who had the biggest marrow. There must have been a **Summer Fair**, because I remember having to practise hard for the Maypole dance, trying to weave under the right person and not get the ribbons in a tangle. The Maypole was always up by the shelter. Phyllis Bligh was in charge with Wilfred playing the music on his squeeze box.

Early Schools.

When I was about three I went to **Long Dene**, a small private progressive school run in a large house in the village. It had a kindergarten run by Phyllis Bligh. The main school was held in huts, with big sliding doors, opening onto the garden. In good weather we used to sit outdoors. My only memory is of using a slate to do writing patterns. These consisted of doing a row of one particular letter as neatly as you could. I liked the C's because when you had done a row of joined up C's you turned the slate upside down and do another row of C's linking the first row and making a very satisfying pattern. Long Dene moved to another location soon after the war started and several parents got together to employ a teacher called Miss Cookson- a sort of governess, who held classes in the dining room at Hawthorn Cottage- ever after known as 'the school room'. I was too young to join them but there are photos of Miss Cookson and her little group on outings. At this time, possibly under her guidance, the children started a 'Newspaper' and I longed to be allowed to be involved and hated being excluded because I was the baby. We had a cleaner and I had been left in her charge while the older children were playing outside and began to taunt the cleaner, who stood up in the bedroom, with me beside her, and shook her broom at them out of the window! I felt a confusing mix of feelings- wishing I was being naughty with the others, but pleased I was safe inside. In Dec 1940 Fred Hancock, on behalf of the Jordans management Committee wrote to say they were breaking their tenancy agreement by using the cottage as a school. So Miss Cookson was dismissed and alternative schools had to be found. At that time there was no State- (or Council) school in Jordans

and the one in Seer Green would not have been thought suitable- I'm afraid Seer Green was very much looked down on as too rough and working class.

Ricky was sent to Gayhurst Prep school in Gerrards Cross and Emmy went to High March, in Beaconsfield. When I was five, in 1941, I joined her there.

High March was a remarkable school, though we didn't realise it at the time. It was run by Miss Warr and Miss Perkins, who lived together. Miss Warr worked with RAB Butler on designing the 1944 Education Act. We were used to try out ideas, such as project work. Although this became a standard way of teaching but at that time it must have been quite new and broke the mould of rows of desks. We did much imaginative work, such as spending weeks designing our very own Utopia Island -its geography, politics, economy, laws flora and fauna etc, covering the whole curriculum. I still have my Utopia work. Another time we went out onto the chalky Chiltern scrub near the school, drew a circle with a piece of string and a skewer and lying flat on our tummies we had to write down everything we saw- flowers, grasses, insects etc-in fact the ecology. Then we drew a plan of our circle. We had many school trips- to a book binding exhibition at Liberty's store in London. We also went to see the bodgers making chair legs in the beech woods around High Wycombe, as well as the Ford's blotting paper factory. For years I kept the swatch of wonderful colour samples they gave us.

My favourite teacher was Mrs Jefferson, who lived in Jordans at 2 The Green. She was very kind and wise and was a war widow from WW1.

We also had a very talented Music teacher called Ludo Reid-the wife of Herbert Reid, the philosopher. They lived in the big thatched house at the end of Long Bottom. With Ludo we wrote little operas- one was called 'The travelling Musicians of Bremen'. We wrote the words and then set them to music. A particularly gifted girl called Mary Brown used to play the piano and often invented the tunes. We also composed a school hymn- I wonder if it is still used! Then of course we would perform our Operas, which I loved. But the other music teacher, Miss Perkins, was a very different matter. She used to take us for singing. She had a very beak like face and a sharp tongue and I was quite afraid of her. I tried really hard at singing but she still singled me out for

High March School



Miss Warr

**HIGH MARCH,
BEAONSFIELD.**

KINDERGARTEN AND JUNIOR SCHOOL.

BY MISS JUDY OWEN REPORT.

Report on: Judy Newell
Term ended: December 18th 1942

Group: 2 No. of children in Group: 22
Age: 6-7 Average age: 7-0
No. of times absent: 0 No. of stories told: 0

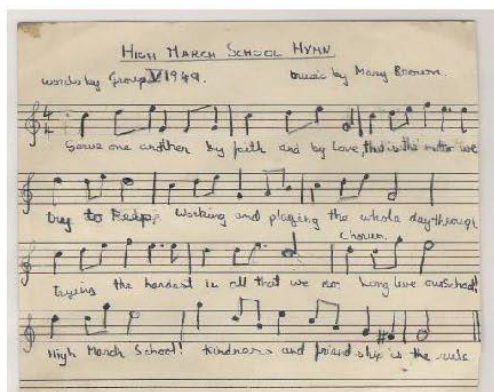
REPORT	REMARKS BY MISS OWEN
LANGUAGE, READING, WRITING, SPELLING AND CALCULATION	Judy is beginning to sound her words well. Her spelling shows increasing improvement.
INTELLIGENCE	Shows an early stage of development. Judy's memory seems to sound well.
SELECTIVE REMEMBRANCE	Has a good appreciation and understanding of the things she has learned.
IMAGINATION	Judy's work is vivid and imaginative.
PHYSIOLOGICAL AND DRAWING	Judy takes a good part in musical activities, and sings well.
PERSONALITY	Judy is well liked, friendly, and confident. She is friendly and confident, and she has quickly taken her place in the group. She expresses herself freely and spontaneously and at the same time shows a keen interest in her work and carry it through to a conclusion.
GENERAL PROGRESS	Judy is well liked, friendly, and confident. She is friendly and confident, and she has quickly taken her place in the group. She expresses herself freely and spontaneously and at the same time shows a keen interest in her work and carry it through to a conclusion.

P. J. OWEN M.F.F.

Next term begins on Tuesday January 19th 1943.
(Remaining school only a few days.)



Top row; 3rd from L Gilly Owen;
4th from L Ros Orford;
2nd row 4th from L Judy



The whole school! 2nd row up: 5th, 6th, and 7th along Mrs Jefferson, Miss Warr and Miss Perkins

**HIGH MARCH,
BEAONSFIELD.**

KINDERGARTEN AND PREPARATORY SCHOOL.

Prof. A. Newell

In account with: Miss Perkins and Miss Warr.

For Emma's credit

	£	s	d.
Attendance at School during	5	5	0
Autumn Term 1943	5	5	0
Handwork Materials Stationery, etc.		15	0
Printed Books			
Panforte Emma	3	13	6
Gymnastics			
Games			
Lunch at School 53	4	0	6
Milk	1	1	0
Total	£ 16	6	6

18. 19. 43

with compliments.

not opening my mouth wide enough. At High March we each had our own little patch of garden to look after. We used to dance on the big lawn-I still think of it when I hear the Nutcracker Suite.

My first day at school was in a very cold spell. I was lucky to have Emmy to take me in and look after me. Ros Orford started that same day but arrived late because they had gone to the Kindergarten house up the road by mistake. I felt sorry for her and this was the start of our life-long friendship.

At school assembly, once a week, all the girls with birthdays that week would go up onto the stage and we'd all sing a special birthday song- not the usual happy birthday. I still remember the words and the tune.

"Birthdays come but once a year, happy day oh happy day;
Through the darkness, through the rain, God has brought us on our way".

We had to walk up the road, in a crocodile, to the Kindergarten for our lunch- it was included in the school fees of £19. 9 shillings per term for Emmy *and* me! For lunch we queued in a passage-way to get into the dining room, with the smell of boiled cabbage and floor polish. The food I'm sure was adequate but I do remember very grisly meat, which I secreted into my pocket- perhaps those ones on my puffed knickers! The pudding we hated was tapioca, which looked like frog's spawn. The very word frog's spawn was later to set us off into uncontrollable giggles. My favourite pudding was an orange cake pudding with a lovely sauce. It must have been after the war when oranges became available again.

We used to cycle to school- about three miles each way. I cycled with Emmy and the older girls- Monica Harman, Eileen Hazel (I think Jenny and Sue went as boarders to the new Long Dene). We had our special half way resting place- a big old fallen oak, which we used to call the tree of rest. We had to cross the main Amersham road, now a terrifying race course but then a quiet lane. The last lap along Ledborough Lane was tree lined with very big houses. One of them was that of another good friend of mine-Rosalind Knight. Later I used to take a sandwich lunch and was allowed to go home with Rosalind and eat them there. She had a big walnut tree in her garden and I loved to shell the nuts because when they were so fresh and green you could peel off the skins in one piece. The white walnut looked like a brain. Sometimes we took the bus to school-the 306. We had to walk down through Crutches wood to the bus stop on Long Bottom. If I set out having forgotten to finish my breakfast milk, Mummy would come running after me, holding the mug, and catch me up as I

reached the wood. She always insisted we have every drop- a vital food stuff during rationing.

Milk was the cause of a nasty accident too. Towards the end of my time at High March I was going to do a 'sleep over' with Angelica Zander, who also went to High March. We were taking the train to Gerrards Cross after school. Mummy was trying to get to Seer Green station in time to hand over my milk ration to take with me. She was rushing across the road and got knocked down by a car. I knew nothing about it till the next day.

In 1949, when I was 13, I went to boarding school and life was never quite the same again. I was always homesick and had a chart by my bed, so I could tick off each day till the next holidays and go home to Jordans. Holidays were very precious times and it was comforting to find that nothing had changed.

Post Jordans

When I finally left home it was a shock to find that the real world was such a different place. We had grown up in a wonderfully safe, caring and nurturing community.- no violence, materialism , class consciousness, poverty etc. I later married in the Meeting house and never lived in Jordans again. Of course we still had my parents and Emma and Gresham and family still there so we came back for holidays, at least once a year. We were so grateful to kind friends, who would let us use their houses while they were on holiday, sparing my parents the exhaustion of 4 small children in *their* house all day! Nowhere we have lived since has ever quite come up to Jordans, a hard act to follow.

When I go back to Jordans now only a handful of people remember me. And although some things have changed Jordans is still a very special place and is it is good to see that the spirit of this lively community is still flourishing. Long may it last!