

# BUTTSBURY

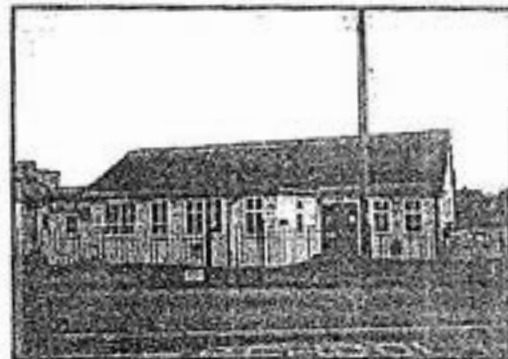
## RECOLLECTIONS OF THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

Contributions from Local Residents

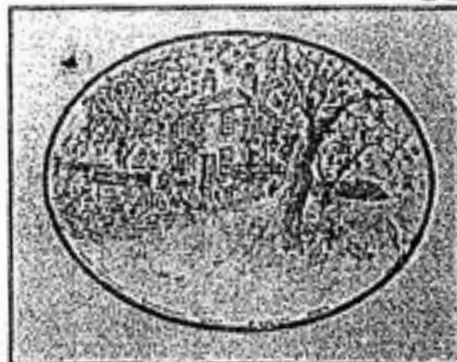
ST MARY'S, BUTTSBURY



BUTTSBURY COUNTY JUNIOR SCHOOL



ROSE COTTAGE



GOOSEBERRY GREEN

RAILWAY COTTAGES



Compiled by  
Sheridan Dicks - Buttsbury Local History - 2001

# BUTTSBURY RECOLLECTIONS OF THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

## CONTENTS

The following Residents were interviewed  
1999 - 2001 by Sheridan Dicks

GREAT BLUNTS	PEGGY NISBET	PAGE 1
SCHOOL & CHURCH - 1930 - 1950'S	AVRIL GORHAM (NEE HARDY)	PAGE 4
PERRY ST & STOCK RD - MID 1930'S	JOAN WHITE	PAGE 8
GOOSEBERRY GREEN - MID 1920'S	LAURENCE G CHILDS	PAGE 11
RAILWAY & ROSE COTTAGES 1920	GRACE BALL & DORIS MAY	PAGE 16
CHRIST CHURCH - LATE 1930'S	BOB JACKSON	PAGE 20
STOCK ROAD - 1920'S	MOLLIE KING	PAGE 23
TYLERS AVENUE - 1930'S	MARJORIE & PETER NEALE	PAGE 28
MILL HILL HOUSE - 1940'S	PAT WOODWARD (NEE BALL)	PAGE 30
POTASH STORES - 1950'S	MILDRED CORDELL	PAGE 32
HANNAKINS COTTAGE - 1930'S	MADIE PUFFET (NEE CHILDS)	PAGE 34
MAY QUEEN CELEBRATIONS - 1934	CHRISTINE WOODWARD (NEE PUGH)	PAGE 38

With Contributions from the following

SCHOOL - LATE 1940'S	PETER BRIERLEY	PAGE 41
ANN ATTRIDGE & PERRY STREET	DOUG BROWN	PAGE 43
SCHOOL - 1935	IVY DALLIMORE (NEE ROBINSON)	PAGE 49
HUNTS DAIRY - POTASH ROAD	DON HUNT	PAGE 52
PERRY STREET	ROY MIZEN	PAGE 56
PERRY STREET & QUEENS PARK	JOYCE SPAUL (NEE REID)	PAGE 58
BUTTSBURY SCHOOL	BRENDA STENTON	PAGE 60

## ILLUSTRATIONS

FRONT COVER:

ST MARY'S BUTTSBURY - BUTTSBURY SCHOOL - ROSE COTTAGE - RAILWAY COTTAGES

Acknowledgements are extended to Billericay Library and the Cater Museum for the use of Sketches by H Richman, and sincere thanks to all contributors for the loan of photographs.

Buttsbury – Great Blunts  
Recollections of Peggy Nisbet



**GREAT BLUNTS, STOCK ROAD, BILLERICAY**

Peggy Nisbet is the daughter of John Nisbet, and granddaughter of Robert Nisbet. He had come down from Scotland about 1886 to farm at Gt Blunts in Buttsbury. Many Scottish farmers were approached at this time and persuaded to travel south.

Robert Nisbet, his wife Maggie and 4 children travelled on a specially hired train, bringing with them all their household goods, farming equipment and their livestock, arriving at Ingatestone Station with all their wares and walking the three miles to Gt Blunts.

From the 1881 Census for Scotland, we learn that Robert Nisbet, born in Slamman, Stirling, was a 29 year old farmer with 110 acres, of which 105 acres were arable, employing 1 man, 1 woman and 1 boy. The man could well have been his brother James Nisbet, an unmarried 25 year old with his occupation being given as Farm Servant. Also with Robert were his wife Maggie born in Ayr, and two sons, George aged 2 and 3 month old John.

From the 1891 Census for Buttsbury, Essex, Robert is now aged 40, living at Gt Blunts with his wife Maggie and seven children. George is not mentioned, but Mary is 16, John, 9, Jeanie 7, Thomas 4 all born in Scotland. Robert 2, Maggie 1 and Marion a few months old were all born in Buttsbury. With them are two cowman John and Allen Chalmers, a Nursemaid Isabella Muir and Agnes Pollock a Domestic Servant all hailing from Scotland.

Miss Nisbet's father, John, had returned to Scotland for his schooling as education was thought to be better there, attending the Kilmarnock Academy and staying with an uncle who lived nearby. Some of the other children may well have done so as well, and perhaps George was one of these?

The Gt Blunts building dates from at least Tudor time (between 1500-1600) as evidenced by the tall Tudor Chimneys with 2" bricks. Some years ago, when internal decorating was being done, underneath the wall paper there were newspapers and these revealed a date of 1842 giving an insight into how decorating was accomplished in that era.

Many people of Scottish origin joined the United Reformed Church and it was to this church that Robert Nisbet became a Trustee and later Church Secretary and Chairman of the Chapel Finance Committee. Great Blunts was officially in the Parish of Buttsbury at that time and it was usual in those days to have a burial in the parish of abode. Peggy recalls that her mother always said "I don't want to be buried at Buttsbury Church" as she thought it was a lonely isolated place. A family plot was purchased at the United Reformed Church in Billericay.

The 1881 Census for Great Blunts, Buttsbury, states that the land comprised 275 acres. Charles Hemplemann the Farmer, employing 13 labourers and 1 boy. The 1891 Census does not give the acreage or numbers employed by Robert Nisbet but as many of the inhabitants of the Buttsbury Parish were agriculture labourers, it can be assumed that some of them would be employed at Great Blunts.

Over the years sales of the land have passed through other hands and more recently was purchased by the Peachey family who built Stock Brook Manor Golf Club.

The house, thought to be of Tudor origin, with its notable chimney stacks, and the remaining outbuildings, stand in about 15 acres with a view at the front towards the Stock Road and a scenic view at the rear over the Golf Course.

Peggy Nisbet's father, John, is known to have held appointments in the area as County Manager of Buttsbury Junior Council School, 1929, and later appointed Vice Chairman of the Managing Body, which post he held until at least the end of the second world war.

Peggy did not attend the Buttsbury School but was sent to the Dame School in Billericay run by Miss Boughtwood - this building faced the High Street - situated by The Crown Public House - this would have been about 1925. She recalls there were high steps leading up to the school. Of the High Street, there were not too many shops but those of Cottis, Purvis the Greengrocer, Moores and Shelleys.

Of the Perry Street area, which was known as Garden Ways, she recalls that as a girl, there were no houses except 2 cottages at the top end of Perry Street. There were plenty of bushes around which, during the war, had to be cleared to make way to cultivate the land and grow vegetables. Mr McCauley was a key worker towards this end.

#### NISBET/NESBET

**From the 1881 Census for Scotland the following noted:  
Living at East Gormyre, Torphichen, Linlithgow, Scotland**

Robert Nisbet Head Mar 29 Farmer of 110 Ac Bn Slamman  
Stirling, Scotland  
together with Wife Maggie, 2 sons named as George aged 2 and John  
3 m and a brother James Nisbet Unm aged 25

<b>1891 Census:</b>	<b>Civil &amp; Ecc. District of Buttsbury</b>	<b>Mid Chelmsford</b>
Gt Blunts, Buttsbury	Robert Nisbet	Head Mar 40 Farmer Bn Scotland
	Maggie Nisbet	Wife Mar 36 Bn Scotland
	Mary Nisbet	Daur Unm 16? Scholar Bn Scotland
	John Nisbet	Son 9 " Bn Scotland
	Jeanie Nisbet	Daur 7 " Bn Scotland
	Thomas C "	Son 4 " Bn Scotland
	Robert "	Son 2 Bn Buttsbury Essex
	Maggie C "	Daur 1? Bn Buttsbury Essex
	Marion C "	Daur ? Bn Buttsbury Essex
	Agnes Pollock	Serv Sgl 17 Dom Serv. Bn Scotland
	Isabella Muir	Serv Sgl 16 Nursemaid Bn Scotland
	John Chalmers	Serv Sgl 21 Cowman Bn Scotland
	Allen Chalmers	Serv Sgl 18 Cowman Bn Scotland

### From "Calling the Generations"

1895	Robert Nisbet the Elder became a Trustee of the United Reformed Church
1895-1899	Robert Nisbet became Church Secretary
1901-1904	The Chapel Finance Committee was under the Chairmanship of Robert Nisbet

### Buttsbury School Records

4 December 1929	At the first Meeting of the School Mr J Nisbet was appointed as a County Manager of Buttsbury Junior Council School Mr J Nesbet was also appointed Vice Chairman of the Managing Body, Rev Rob Pemberton appointed Chairman. Mr J Nisbet was also appointed Representative of the Joint Committee for the purpose of appointing a Head Teacher.
25 June 1930	He signed as John Nisbet - Chairman
27 October 1937	Mr J Nisbet re-elected Vice-Chairman of the Managing Body
24 April 1940	Last Meeting of the Managers until they resumed 16 July 1945. No mention of Mr J Nisbet after this date
1st March 1948	Minutes of Managers ends.

### Electoral Registers

1894/5	Robert Nisbet
1901	Robert Nisbet
1911	Jane Nisbet, Buttsbury, Ingatestone House, Gt Blunts
1911	Jane Nisbet, Buttsbury, Ingatestone Land, Gt Blunts
1911	John Nisbet, Buttsbury, Ingatestone Land, Gt Blunts

Buttsbury from the late 1930's  
Buttsbury School & Christ Church Mission  
Recollections of Avril Gorham (nee Hardy)



**CHRIST CHURCH MISSION**  
Dedication Service - 21 January 1933

Avril has lived in the Mountnessing Road all her life, born nearby in 1935. Her family are well known in the area and during the intervening years they have witnessed many changes in the Mountnessing Road and Perry Street areas. Avril's father was a brick-layer, working firstly for Cronin, Builders of Brentwood, doing much work on war property all over Essex, cycling to and from the job each day. He later worked for Billericay Builders, Jacksons of Potash Road, involved in the building of homes, which included Anvil House in Perry Street.

#### **School**

Avril attended Buttsbury County Junior School from 1940 soon after the start of the Second World War. Unfortunately, film was not available during this period so photos are not available. She recalls there were two evacuees attending the school at that time; they were both cockney lads, one named Richard Chamberlain, a very blond haired boy and the other Kenneth Stephens (or Stephenson) who lodged at the same place nearby. During air raids the children were all herded into the shelters situated in the playground, where they sat on long benches. These two lads were the life and soul of the party, each having a great sense of humour, teaching them all the cockney songs they knew. Not all the time, naturally, as some of the time would be given to reading out loud to the teacher and the class.

The toilets were outside in a separate building and remained so for many years. She recalls one very snowy winter when the girls built an igloo on one side of the playground and the boys an igloo on the other and then proceeded to have a terrific snowball fight.

The milk was delivered in third pint bottles by Hunts Dairy from Potash Road and the Monitor of the day would tell the milkman how many bottles were needed for that particular day. Heat was provided by the tortoise stoves. She took sandwiches from home but became heartily sick of them as her mother always packed them with beetroot - and she won't eat beetroot to this day!

Each of the three classrooms were divided into years. She believes the Infants were for 5 - 7 years, the Juniors 8 - 9 and the Seniors 10 - 11. It was probably quite difficult for the teachers to supervise different age groups - one in each half of the class.

Of the Teaching Staff she recalled Mrs D'eath who came from Chelmsford. Even after Avril had left the school she returned in later years to help to hear the children read etc. Reading during her time there was carried out each day when each pupil read a chapter out loud to the class. She feels she learned a lot in her school days about religion as the teacher would read a chapter from the Bible and explain it as well. Mrs D'eath was very good at drawing pictures and when she set the children a poem to learn she would illustrate it with pictures on the blackboard, i.e. The 'Ducks Ditty' by Kenneth Graham, for which she drew ducks and reeds, or the 'Owl and the Pussy Cat' - it made it far more interesting for the children.

She recalls an incident during school time - which would not be allowed today. During the War, some Italian prisoners billeted locally were set the task of cleaning out the river banks nearby and they often came to the school fence to talk to the children, bringing with them little crafts they had made, such as purses and necklaces which they gave to the children.

Avril was an active member of both the Brownies and the Guides. A photo of the Brownies is depicted towards the end of the War, which group was held in Christ Church Mission Hall at the time, and a photo of the Guides, later held in the Mayflower Hall, Chapel Street.

### **A stroll along Mountnessing Road and Perry Street**

These two roads were the only ones that were made up when Avril was small. She recalls that next door to where she now lives was a huge pond where the children very often played. It had stepping-stones and sometimes, if you were to lift the stones, grass snakes would appear from under them. The south side of Mountnessing Road was not in the Buttsbury Parish at that time, but worth mentioning was the chestnut plantation, which ran from Railway Cottages (where 'The Pilgrim' now stands) to Lt Cowbridge Grange.

Continuing towards the River Wid, there were three cottages situated where the road turns. They were occupied by the Wrens, the Puffets and the Langdon families. Then on to Lawness Farm, worked by the Macauley family. The Nunn family lived in the tied cottage.

During the 30's and 40's, there were very few houses in the area. The parishes were divided by Mountnessing Road, the north side of which was in Buttsbury Parish and the south side in Mountnessing Parish. Prior to living in her present home she had lived with her parents and brother in a bungalow just up the road near to where the new housing development now stands on the site of the old Mayflower Hospital and, just beyond that was some vacant land, then a row of about 5 bungalows.

On the corner (now Bridge Parade) there was a great big house which her father had told her had been a Pub when he was a boy. When Avril knew the house, it was divided into two with one door in Perry Street and one door in Mountnessing Road, occupied by the Wrayton and Parker families.

Turning left into Perry Street and continuing on the left hand side, were two or three fields with a back entry into Crescent Road. Shortly after this was a bungalow, recently demolished, occupied latterly by Mrs Chapman, (situated on the corner of Wick Glen and replaced with two detached executive homes). Just beyond this was the brook that ran from the park, crossing Perry Street and down to Brightside (now piped underground). Another bungalow was next, near to an empty field and the hill rose until you reached the Ricketts house named "Floreatdale" set between what is now Wick Glen and Upland Road. Then on to "Stone House", where lived Mr and Mrs Pemberton, situated in large grounds which ran to the top of what is now Upland Road. (At the bottom of this road is Brightside which was known as "aeroplane way" - does anyone know why?).

Opposite Upland Road stood Perry Cottage where Mr and Mrs Elleman lived. Queens Park Stores at that time was situated on the southside of what is now the Queens Park roundabout, run by Mrs Shuttleworth, the store having a side entrance as well as a front door. Until the early 1970's there was only a turning into Queens Park and straight to Perry Street but later this changed when the new housing estates sprang up and the roundabout was built.

Just beyond this area and set back from the road a little was another row of houses and nothing else but a track which led to the chicken farm which the Atkinson family ran, near to a house occupied by the Knight family. Sylvia Knight played the organ for Christ Church and Buttsbury Church for many years. Passing Hill House Drive on the right, there was then only one large house before Christ Church Mission Hut was reached which was situated on the left hand side of Perry Street nearly opposite the school.

Crossing over, we come to Buttsbury School and returning down Perry Street on the east side we approach a very big house where lived the Skewes family. Beyond this was Hillhouse Drive where the Vicar, the Revd Thomas resided.

Continuing down Perry Street towards the site of what is now the Baptist Church was situated a beautiful house with terraced gardens, possibly known as the Rockeries. Before taking the track to the park was Radfords Nursery where Eva Stewart worked with her sister - the area was quite large and Mrs Radford had a bungalow built nearby on part of the land.

On the site now occupied by 'Old Farm Court' stood two old wooden rendered cottages before the Barns. One of the cottages was occupied by the Brown family (Douglas Brown has recently written articles for 'Billericay Life' magazine). In later years the barns were held by Hatcher as a wood yard, then Butts the Builder, after which came a dis-used bungalow. Next came a bungalow occupied by the Knightbridge family.

There was then only Baker's Field and one bungalow laid far back from the road until you turned left into The Chase (now Radford Way) and on to Brickfield Cottages, two pairs of semi's, one of which was occupied by an aunt of Avril's. The Risbys and Norris families lived there during the war (Mrs Norris worked for the food office). The others were occupied by the Collards and the Hales families. The Brickfields, as they were then known (now Radford Industrial Estate), were excavated for sand and ballast. The Harris's owned this land around this time and Avril's uncle, George Collard, worked for him as a cowman. Facing the brickfields was a view towards fields and a footpath across and round the railway line.

Avril remembers the Park in those days and the swimming pool which had been built with access from Lakeside. Whether it was filled in later is open to conjecture.

### **Church**

As her parents had done before her, Avril and her husband Colin were married at St Giles, Mountnessing. Christ Church Mission at the time was not licensed for marriages although there is a photo dated about 1948 of the only wedding to be held in the Mission Hut - that of Irene Brown, who lived in Potash Road, and her husband. Together with Leslie Kidgell, the Jacksons and the Hills, they were involved in arranging social events, such as concerts and sketches, in the Mission Hut, using the altar area as a stage.

Avril and her parents have always been actively involved in Christ Church and have seen many changes and growth in the congregation and building. When Avril and her friend Dorothy decided to be confirmed, for instruction they would cycle over to the rectory in Fryerning Road, Ingatestone. Mr Foulerton having taken over the living when the Revd Pemberton died.

In 1982, the 50th Anniversary of the Sunday School was celebrated at Christ Church when some of the parishioners shared their memories with the children. For eight years from 1952 Avril was the Kindergarten Sunday School Superintendent, the numbers growing dramatically as a result of the increase of building in the area. She and Bob Jackson took over from Miss Frost whose health had deteriorated. Miss Frost had always held a summer party in the grounds of her house, 'Bucklands', in Hill House Drive, setting up a treasure hunt in the garden as the highlight of the afternoon and each year a little play was performed enacting a bible story. In January, Christmas parties were held which were enjoyed by all. Avril was also involved with the Youth Club for some years and later her husband Colin became Treasurer of the first Christ Church Council.

Avril's mother, Mrs Jessie Hardy, has also been very active in the church from early times. They have together arranged the distribution of the harvest to the elderly in the neighbourhood for many years and also arranged the flower rota, providing many different plants and greenery from their own gardens on many occasions, as and when required. Until recent times, Avril's mother was to be seen cycling in the area, which has stood her in good stead as she is now in her nineties!

Avril's daughter, Karen, has always been involved with Christ Church, firstly at Sunday School and then as Sunday School teacher, working later as the Office Administrator, culminating in her decision to join the Ministry. After working for two years in the Diocese of Hull, she was accepted for training at Bristol Theological College, was ordained in York Minster in July 1995 and is now licensed as Priest in Charge at St Pauls, Maidstone, in Kent.



**'FOUR ELMS' MOUNTNESSING ROAD**

Courtesy of Avril Gorham

#### RED CROSS GROUP – Early 1950's



Lorraine Turman Sheila Kidgell Avril Hardy Mrs King ? Mary Thirkettle Margaret Webber ? Gillian Gurley  
 ? Doran Jackson Dorothy Suscans Christa Crowe Cynthia Brown ? Iris Jolley Brenda Carsdale  
 Annaliese Crowe Lillian Crowe Lillian Cowell Barbara Orphan ? Marian Burgess Thelma Brown Kathleen O'Riordan

Perry Street from the mid 1930's  
Buttsbury School & Stock Road  
Recollections of Joan White



THE WHITE FAMILY OF  
SMALLGAINS LANE

### Background

Joan is the daughter of George and Annie White. She was the 'baby' of the family with two sisters and two brothers. Joan was born in a house owned by the Spurlings next to the Old Kings Head in the Stock Road - a large red bricked house. Her father George was born in Stock at Everitts cottages and her mother Annie (real name Martha) was from the Harrington family of Broomfield who lived to the grand age of nearly 96 years. The Whites were a local family having a farm of that name in Smallgains Lane (sometimes known as Newmans farm). One of Joan's brothers worked at Hoffmans in Chelmsford whilst Joan worked at Jameson, the Optical factory, where she subsequently met her husband Maurice. One of Joan's sisters was initially in domestic service and cooked for the Matthews family in Stock - the converted house next to the shop on the corner of Swan Lane, later working for the Nevilles at Galleywood before moving to Ingatestone.

### The School

A resident of the Orchard Avenue end of Perry Street for some 63 years Joan recalled that, when a pupil at the local primary school, it was known as Perry Street School. She attended from about 1938 until the end of the Second World War. Miss Corcoran, the Headmistress, was remembered as a disciplined but fair teacher and was at the school for many years. She and her family lived in Stock on premises belonging to the Catholic Church and the Perry Street family renewed their friendship as they had all known one another in earlier times in the village.

There were three classrooms comprising Infants, Juniors and Seniors with about 36 pupils in each. Miss Parish taught the Infants, Miss D'eath the Juniors and Miss Corcoran and Miss Evans taught the Seniors. There was a separate entrance at each end of the building for Boys and Girls. Toilets were communal and situated in a separate block at the rear of the school across the playground. The playground was large and they were able to play sports plus hopscotch and throwing bean bags and participated in country dancing. There was a large wall along the side of the school where they were able to play ball.

In the winter each classroom had a heater. The school dinners were transported in a van - proper meals with meat and two veg - possibly more than coupons allowed at home. These were served with chunks of bread and a pudding such as Spotted Dick or Treacle Tart. They were very good and nourishing. Ladies came in to school to serve them. The milk was heated in a huge churn.

### Perry Street area

Having lived in the same house in Perry Street for the past 63 years when the family moved from their Stock Road home into their new house, one of two pairs built in the early 1930's, outwardly the homes do not appear to have altered very much. The houses were built with two living rooms, kitchen, 3 bedrooms and a bathroom. The front of the house overlooked Perry Street which was tarred and shingled in those days and access was through to the Stock Road. During the summer months it is remembered that the tar was inclined to melt and stick to the soles of shoes. There were no made up pavements but on the front boundary were 6 ft ditches and the water from these ran to the farmland to where the Potash Roundabout is situated and where there was a brook at that time (hence Brookside). Some water came from Mr Nisbet's farm situated on the Stock Road and then went underground - probably to Potash Road. Many of the surrounding plots had the original bungalows built on them and many of the plots extended to the Stock Road and those on Stock Road had access to Perry Street from their back gates. It is believed that Field 159 on the 1922 map was owned by Gt Blunts. The upper end of Perry Street (with the bollards) was known as Perry Street 1 and Orchard Avenue was known as Perry Street 2 in times past.

The Bridles at that time was known as Green Lane, and this route was used to get to Norsey Woods to gather pea sticks with the permission of the Gamekeeper who also looked after Forty Acre Wood where there pheasants at that time. Father and daughter would travel together and carry the peasticks they had gathered to their home, father with his sticks over his shoulder and daughter, being so small, with the sticks under her arm.

Two bungalows, Oakdene and Lynmouth were demolished in the 1960's and land was acquired from some of the surrounding homes to build in what is now known as 'The Priory'. The numbering starts at 6 and 8 and it may well be that the builder had hoped to acquire more land for development.

In the early 1940's a track ran alongside the two pairs of houses from Perry Street to Central Avenue. A quaint couple by the name of Briggs owned an open-topped car and travelled this route occasionally, the lady wearing a fox-fur and the gentleman sporting a moustache and a trilby hat. This track ran alongside land occupied at the time by farm buildings and barns - Plot 157 on the 1922 map (the site of Dirty Hall Farm). Opposite Norsey View Drive was the Catholic Priest's house.

Another couple living nearby - Mr and Mrs Schooling - as Mr Schooling was a builder, he built their own home called 'Fredor' as well as another bungalow which accommodated Mrs Lee, a sister of Mrs Schooling.

Norsey View Drive had a number of plots at this time and one occupant, namely Mr Rolfe lived in a bungalow at the corner of Central Avenue. He had a deep well in his front garden at that time (was it filled in?). Mr Rolfe was known to many of the local school children as he later became the school crossing patrol. There were a number of natural wells and streams in the area at the time. In Norsey View Drive near to where the Woods family lived at their bungalow named 'Wendy' was a little copse where lots of bluebells grew. Mr and Mrs Jillings had a house built for their daughter and son in law in Perry Street known as 'Dutch Barn'. Mr Jillings worked as a cowman with Mr French on Nisbet's farm.

Other families recalled were the Elmores, the Flacks, Hills, Webb, Brassetts and Freight all living in Orchard Avenue.

### Further afield

In the 1940's-50's it is remembered there was Bush Hall Stores ran by Mrs Hayworth. It was a quaint little shop which housed the Post Office, it had wooden counters and sold different types of sweets kept in tall jars. Lanterns provided the light. Alongside was a lovely orchard where the children were allowed to pick up the windfalls and eat them, as well as being sold in the shop. In later years, another family called 'White' took it over and Joan and other members of her family occasionally helped in the shop.

There was also another shop, called 'The Steps', situated on the left hand side of Stock Road towards Billericay (just before St Johns School) which sold 'everything' including tea and sugar, kept in huge tubs, which was weighed and packaged in brown paper on the premises for customers.

The International Stores in Billericay High Street delivered provisions, such as bacon, sugar, etc the whole weekly shop in the 40's-50's amounting to no more than £1.7s.6d.

Two milkman are remembered in the area, Ricketts of the 'Fairway' and the Hunts in Potash Road, delivering fresh milk which was measured and sold from metal jugs and later in bottles.

The Ice-cream man rode a bicycle around the area which held a metal container on the front with room for the ice-cream and ice.

### The War Years

During the 2nd World War search lights are remembered scanning the skies and it is believed that a bomb, possibly a doodle bug, was dropped in the vicinity of Springfield Road causing a huge crater. Another, possibly an Aerial Torpedo, dropped at the top end of Perry Street at the rear of the Catholic Priest's house, taking the window panes out. It is recalled that a Night lamp blew over and rolled to the edge of the table fortunately extinguishing the flame before more damage was caused.

Many people had an Anderson shelter in their back gardens. School was terminated at the beginning of the War but resumed within a short while. There were two large brick built Air Raid Shelters in the school grounds situated near to the toilets - they are remembered as being cold and damp with long benches to sit on. It is believed the end of the War was celebrated with a party in Central Avenue. Do you recall the celebrations that took place?

### BUSH HALL STORES c 1934



Acknowledgement: B Gilroy



THE PERRY STREET HOME  
BUILT EARLY 1930'S

**Buttsbury - the 1920's to early 1930's**  
**Gooseberry Green/Mountnessing Road/Perry Street**  
**Recollections of Laurence G Childs**

### **Background**

Laurence is a member of the long established Childs family whose family originated from Stock. He is a local artist of some renown painting local scenes in oils and exhibiting at various venues in the area. He was born in Billericay in September 1918 the second youngest in the family with three sisters and a brother. One of his sisters died in about 1928 in St Andrews Hospital and in about 1930 a brother was tragically killed in a motor cycle accident. He has two older sisters, one of whom, Madie, has also described her personal memories.

Laurence was born in a cottage situated behind the Railway cottages at Gooseberry Green, now occupied by 'The Pilgrim' and he was christened at St Giles Mountnessing by the Revd Cobbing and has lived in that village for some time now. Like his sister and other siblings, Laurence attended Gt Burstead Council School (now known as Quilters) in the mid 1920's as Buttsbury School was not built until 1930.

Laurence's first job was at the Atkinson Press situated on the Stock Road where he earned 6/-d. per week. He later worked at Mr Bindoff's garage which was situated at the junction of London Road and Western Road, where a garage exists to this day. The corner in past times was known as Harts Corner as the Harts ran a Sweetshop alongside the garage where the 'Cars for Sale' are now situated.

He left after a short while and with George Tupper an old school friend with whom he worked secured a job at Cromptons in Chelmsford who produced Electrical Switchgears, returning to this company after having served in the Middle East during the war after serving for six and half years. He is a long standing active member of the Middle East Veterans' Association, their meetings being held in 'The Hut' behind the 'Rising Sun'. Cromptons was ultimately bought out by Hawker Siddeley and Laurence decided to set up his own company in Beehive Lane, until the land was compulsorily purchased by Chelmsford Council, so he later worked as an estimator for a friend involved in the sheet metal business.

In 1950 Laurence married Ena Bradman at St Mary's Shenfield. She was a childhood friend living nearby at Gooseberry Green. During the war Ena had been a Physical Training Instructor with the ATS and afterwards had worked as a Telephone Operator with the GPO at the Brentwood Telephone Exchange. Her father, Jacob Bradman, born in Linton, Cambridgeshire, was in fact related to Don Bradman the famous cricketer, their ancestors having originated from Withersfield Suffolk and previously Bradenham in Norfolk. There is a Family Tree detailing the family going back to the 1700's and an article on Pages 12 and 13 in the September 1998 edition of 'The Cricketer' detailing Sir Donald Bradman's ancestry. In 1954 their daughter was born.

### **Mountnessing Road area**

As Laurence was born in this area, we start our walk in the area of Mountnessing Road. Just south of the Railway Bridge at Mountnessing Road is a lane which at that time led to both the cricket ground and to Ricketts Dairy. Mr Ricketts would travel around with a horse and cart and a milk churn and with a container run the milk off. They had a scoop and poured it into the customer's jug. Mr Ricketts also had two or three sons who worked with him. Ricketts and the cricket ground have now gone, the cricket ground to pastures new in Blunts Wall Road, but the name of Ricketts has been perpetuated as one of the roads near to Gooseberry Green now bears this name.

Around that area Laurence and his friends used to go scrumping occasionally, one target being Dick Stephens house. If he saw them he would often chase them and invariably to escape they had to leave their bikes. When they returned some time later to collect them the lads would often find that to teach them a lesson Dick had let the tyres down and consequently they had to push their bikes with the flat tyres through gates and over fields to their homes.

Continuing north across the railway bridge up Mountnessing Road towards Gooseberry Green, was a steep bank and facing it were some cottages one of which was occupied by Laurence and his family with Mr Bush who lived next door and close by was the Groves. They were situated just at the rear of where 'The Pilgrim' now stands.

The cottage was thatched and weather boarded with a living room in the centre, a bedroom on either side and a kitchen at the rear. Outside there were hedges on the left of the cottage and apple trees on the right. Oil lamps were used for lighting (electricity did not come until the 50's). A gallon of paraffin was bought from Mrs Shuttleworth at her Queen's Park Stores in Perry Street to fill the oil lamps.



#### SHUTTLEWORTH STORES PERRY, STREET

From an Illustration by H Richman

For cooking there was a kitchen range with an oven fuelled by coal. Sacks were filled up at the coal yard by the railway with coal, coke or kitchen nuts and the coalman then went out to deliver on his horse and cart?

For bathing, there was a tin bath for which the water had to be heated either in large saucepans heated on the range or later in a copper housed in a brick built unit which was fired from beneath. Mains water was laid on to a tap by the gate - 30 yards from the house. Unfortunately, the cottage burnt down just after the 2nd WW.

The view from the rear of the cottage was towards Lt Cowbridge Grange with meadows between where before the war hay was always grown. It was only during the 2nd WW that all the fields were ploughed up and cultivated as every spare piece of ground had to be used for growing food.

Laurence recalls being told by his mother that she had been quite concerned during the 1st WW when the Zeppelin was falling in flames and she thought it would land on the railway station but of course it went on to the Jacksons Lane area. She often referred to the "Zeppelin came over the custard tree" (custard tree referred to a type of apple - yellow in colour - another type of apple was the "Blenheim Orange").

Along the south side of Mountnessing Road (leading towards Bluebell Wood) was a Plantation which ran between the cottages and Cowbridge Grange at that time. Chestnut trees were grown here for the chestnut fencing which was very popular at the time as this was the period when plots of land were being sold and poultry houses erected on smallholdings which

were springing up in the area. In Lt Cowbridge Grange, opposite Hannakins farm, lived Lizzie Drummond a lady well known in the area until recent times. She was often to be seen galloping across the fields on her horse.

Laurence's wife, when a young girl living with her family, moved at one time to a bungalow situated near Cowbridge Wood, now Bluebell Wood, and later lived opposite the station in a bungalow owned by the man with the limp known as 'Hobbly Harris' for obvious reasons. He also owned the Brickfields at that time, where her father worked.

Hannakins, opposite Lt Cowbridge, still stands today, a private home set back on the north side of Mountnessing Road. Nearby lived the Puffet family for a while including Bill, Percy and Albert, the last named marrying Laurence's sister Madie. Hannakins was a working farm until at least after the 2nd WW. Next door, where she lived until recently, was Ivy Collard who married one of the Wrens and who is especially remembered for riding her bicycle around the area.

Situated where the roundabout is now at Gooseberry Green and facing onto the Mountnessing Road at this junction in the early 1900's was a green triangle and opposite the green on the south side of the road, where 'The Pilgrim' now stands, were Railway Cottages. In the late 1920's and early 1930's lived four families with the names Lindsay, Geeves, Clark and Crawley. Mr Geeves did the shunting in the station goods yard and had four daughters, Nellie, Grace, Elsie and Jessie. Jessie was one of Laurence's earliest playmates and now lives in North Devon.

There were a few wooden bungalows here and Nancy Poulson lived in one whilst just opposite to Railway cottages on the junction with Mountnessing Road and Perry Street was the home of Bill and Doris Parker (now May) who now lives Roman Way. Doris's mother was a WW1 widow, typical of the day, wore her hair in a bun. She is remembered as having a walnut tree in the garden. One story told is that situated near to the Methodist Church, in some privately owned ground, were some walnut trees (which appear to have grown profusely in Billericay at that time) and many children used to creep in and pick them. The only thing was the green husk of the walnut would leave a brown stain on your fingers and if complaints were made to the school, the local policeman would come along next day to investigate to find out who the culprits were and of course, many of them were found to have the tell-tale signs still on their fingers.

#### **Perry Street area**

Next to the Parkers lived Old Bill Keeling. He was a bachelor who lived with his mother but when he was 40 years old he sadly committed suicide.

Continuing up Perry Street and encompassing an area now known as Knightbridge Walk, Ricketts Drive, Hares Chase and Attridge Chase, deriving their names from the local people who lived in the area at the time, was Baker's Meadow in the centre of which was a pond. On a freezing winter's night heavy with snow the children used to take hurricane lamps filled with paraffin with them to light their way and make huge slides to play on and have snowball fights.

Between Gooseberry Green and Perry Street where the road dips to its lowest point before climbing once again there were only meadows and fields and no other houses until you reached a pair of 2 storey houses (which still exist) which were built and lived in by the Williams family. Opposite and laying right back from the road, was a wooden bungalow named 'OIDUNNO'. It appears that the man who built it was asked on completion, "What are you going to call it?" to which he replied, "Oh, I dunno." Crescent Road was an unmade

track which ran at right angles to Perry Street with access from the dip of the road and to Mountnessing Road at the other end. Around this area was meadowland where lived the Drivers - Helen, Doris and Florrie and brother Henry.

Continuing along Perry Street, we come to George Hare who drove the ambulance and lived next door to Mrs Shuttleworth and Grace her daughter who ran the Queens Park Stores, situated at the time on the south side of what is now the roundabout. They sold all types of wares including paraffin for heating. Grace is remembered as a beautiful girl who later married Len Welham, a family who in earlier times had lived in Railway Cottages and is thought to have run a taxi service in the early 1930's. There was only a fork in the road at this time, Perry Street continuing to the right and a track leading to Queens Park to the left.

Just up the road from Queens Park Stores was another shop run by a Mr Spencer. He was something of a celebrity to the locals at that time as he had participated in films - silent movies at that time - but was thought to be something of an actor and impressed the locals with these stories. Further along, of course, was Mrs Knightbridge and only meadows and fields until you arrived at Mr Bolt's home who lived opposite what is now the school site.

Old Farm Court as it is known today now stands on the site previously occupied by the company Wyle & Thatchers (to check Elec.Reg. for spelling) who built the chicken sheds for the chicken farms which were springing up in the area. Many of the barns remained until Old Farm Court was built in recent times.

Continuing on the right hand side up Perry Street was Mrs Attridge who lived near the corner of the track which led to Lake Meadows. She is remembered in those days as one of the women who could be seen leaning on the front gate to have a gossip with passers-by. Then there were the Bennetts and the Christie families.

Veering off our path at this point, we arrive at Lake Meadows which at the turn of the century had been built by Major Thomas Spitty who owned Hillhouse and the land around it. During Laurence's childhood Lake Meadows was still privately owned, at one time by Mr Spurling and later by Reg Connolly, of Tin Pan Alley fame, composer, amongst others songs, of that well-known song 'Goodnight Sweetheart'. He ran the Campbell Connolly Publishing Group and had bought both Hillhouse and Lake Meadows. The Meadows were only open to the public on very rare occasions so youngsters used to surreptitiously gain access in the dark and 'borrow' a punt to take out on the Lake which in those days were very clear but also very deep. The Park was only opened to the public on special occasions for charity functions such as when the Fete would be held. The Bluecoats came to play the music in the 1930's and the day would finish with a glorious fireworks display (where the poplar trees now grow).

At the Perry Street end of the Lake was the swimming pool. This had been dug out by local volunteers. There were adequate changing huts and school parties came to use it too, many children learning to swim there. At the Opening Ceremony, Temme, a well-known Channel swimmer, may have been the celebrity who declared it open (1932/33) Search Newspaper Report\*\* 'Billericay Times' printed by the Caxton Press a business situated up the Hill near to the Railway Hotel)

Near to Queens Park Stores was a cinder track leading to Queens Park and Buckwyns which offered some diversion for the local youngsters of the day and Laurence recalls that every Sunday morning he and some friends took a couple of dogs to chase the rabbits. They didn't have guns of course and wouldn't do it these days but in those days it was a normal event. They went over to Buckwyns and generally caught a rabbit which would, when skinned and cleaned, make a lovely stew.

Plots of land were being sold in the Queens Park and Buckwyns areas during the 1930's although there were few permanent houses in the area but invariably they were surrounded by woods and scrubby ground. (Later, of course, the land was cultivated during the war years). Poultry farms were run with the benefit of free-range eggs and chickens for Christmas! Buckwyns at that time had little shacks where some families lived and their children would have walked to Gt Burstead School in Laidon Road in early times, later attending Buttsbury.

'Walking Stick Wood' as it was known, situated near to Buckwyns, was where Ash trees had been planted, the wood from which was used to make walking sticks - hence its name. In this wood lived a fellow called 'Dusty Flowers'. He was rather a scary fellow. He never appeared to wash, was always unkempt, unshaven, dirty, wore hornrimmed glasses and never changed his clothes. It is thought he had been crossed in love and decided to revert to nature and was rather frightening to a youngster. But Dusty was a marvel mechanic, he had been a brilliant engineer and was able to repair many things, including bicycles and, when things went wrong, you went to see Dusty. It so happened when Laurence was about 12 years old he had bought himself a bike for 12/6d from someone in Stock Road and when it needed attention he had trepiditiously had to wheel it up to Dusty Flowers' shack. When he arrived, he banged on the door for some time until the door was opened ajar and a fierce voice asked "What d'yer want?" When Laurence told him he needed his cycle mended old Dusty gruffly replies "Alright, leave it 'ere" and did some excellent welding on it charging only 3/6d for repairing it.

#### **Further afield**

During hot sultry evenings youngsters would occasionally cycle towards Buttsbury Wash near the Church to have a swim in the River Wid or a deep pool which was situated there. There was also an area used as a Polo ground during the 1930's between Buttsbury church and the narrow bridge on the Ingatestone Road with which the Buckingham's, an established family in the area, were very much involved.

Travelling back along the Ingatestone Road to Stock Road, was Brocks Farm which many years ago Laurence had painted and it may well be the only one in existence. Buttsbury Church and Mountnessing Church also feature in the paintings he has produced.

Excitement when the Fair came to Sun corner (opposite the Rising Sun).

#### **Other people recalled**

Recalls a friend Johnny Ward, living in Billericay since the 20's, who became a well known Boxer. He worked in the Co-op until he entered the Air Force at beginning of the War.

Wag Staines lived in Hillhouse in the 1930's.

Tubby Taylor lived in Western Road (referred to in Billericay book)

Mrs Trout (Prout) lived in School Road - (p.55 of Billericay book)

Mr Munt lived in the gatehouse of the Isolation Hospital in Mountnessing Road and drove the Ford Model T ambulance. Patients with such diseases as Scarlet Fever would be hospitalised here.

Ivy Fisher now Ivy Harvey - who lives near Potash roundabout.

Buttsbury from the early 1920's  
Railway Cottages and Rose Cottage, Goosberry Green  
Recollections of Grace Ball (nee Geeves) and Doris May (nee Parker)



**MAYDAY CELEBRATIONS MID 1920'S**

Back Row: Grace Geeves/Doris Parker/Mary Mudd

Middle Row: Twin Jarvis/Rose Attridge/Dolly Youngman

Front Row: Mollie Coleman/Billie Mudd/Nellie Geeves/Bill Parker/Twin Jarvis

Grace and Doris knew one another as children as they lived opposite at Gooseberry Green. Grace lived with her parents and sisters, Ellen, Elsie and Jessie, at Railway Cottages as her father Sam worked in the shunting yard for the Railway and Doris lived with her family at 'Rose Cottage' now the site of the Post Office on Bridge Parade.

Grace's home was one of four cottages, two pairs of semi-detached. These housed families in early times with the surnames Welham at No 1 Railway Cottage, the Geeves at No 2, the Coleman family at No 3 (occupied by Mollie Coleman who was later to marry into the Ricketts family) and the Keene family at No 4. Later families included Lindsay, occupied in later times by Will Attridge, an uncle of Doris, then Crawley and Clark, Reg being the last occupier. Uncle Will had been involved with the installation and repair of the railways and later on the electrification in the 1950's.

Railway cottages each consisted of a dining room, a front room, seldom used, and a scullery which held a range, but her mother did not like to use this for cooking, and preferred an oil stove, which was started with methylated spirits, then kerosene. A copper raised on a brick base was used for washdays when a fire would be lit underneath to heat the water. Upstairs were three bedrooms. Grace recalls that her father built huge rose arches to the front door which later, unfortunately, had to be cut down as it obscured the view of traffic coming round the corner. There were also high white gates and these had to be half cut down as well.

Railway Cottages were demolished in the 1970's to make way for 'The Pilgrim' as we see it today. In the early twentieth century sited behind the Railway cottages were two cottages. One was occupied by the Childs family and the other by Mr Bush and they had uninterrupted views towards Little Cowbridge Grange.

Doris's parents, Amy Attridge and William Parker, met whilst they were both working in London, Amy as a domestic servant and William as an engineer. William came from north London but when they married they both came to live in Buttsbury, Amy returning to her roots in the country. William travelled to his job in Tottenham with the Amalgamated Engineering Company building buses etc returning to Buttsbury at weekends.

Amy Attridge was the youngest daughter of Sarah Speller and John Attridge. Sarah was the daughter of Henry Speller, a Thatcher, of Buttsbury and Anne nee Glasscock of Great Burstead. There were two very distinct unrelated families named Attridge living in the

Buttsbury/Billericay area during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, John Attridge descending from the family who originated in Blackmore.

When Doris was born, the house was in the ownership of Miss Hes, and although tragically Doris's father, William Parker, died at only 29 years of age, when Doris was only seven years old, her mother remained in Rose Cottage until the 1950's when it was sold to a developer.

The Bridge Parade Post Office is now on the site of Rose Cottage. Doris recalls that the house was divided into two homes. The Parkers lived in one half and the Keeling family in the other. One door opened onto Mountnessing Road and the other onto Perry Street. It was an extremely picturesque house, surrounded by trees and flowers and was extremely old with cellars and exposed beams. The walls are believed to originally have been built of wattle and daub. It had two staircases, the original in the Keeling home and a new winding spiral one in the Parkers home. The Parkers home had a living room/kitchen with a range which had to be black-leaded, and a sitting room used for special occasions. The copper, used for the washing, was situated in a shed lit as usual by a fire. They well remember using the tin bath in front of the fire, very cosy and warm. There were also exceptional toilet facilities, two toilets in fact, the larger one being for adults and the smaller one for youngsters! In those days, cesspits were in the grounds of most homes. They were built of concrete in many cases and a pumping mechanism was used to empty them.

They recall there were chestnut trees in the rear garden at that time with open views towards Queens Park and Buckwyns as well as Mountnessing. Behind Rose Cottage was a meadow leading to the Brook, which ran across Perry Street at its lowest ebb. Mr Perrin lived near there in a shanty type hut. Mrs Driver and her family later came to live there and she eventually married Mr Perrin and they had a son. Opposite, situated on the right hand side of Perry Street was the cottage 'Oidunno' where the Corbetts, Hilda Welham and the Spauls lived.

Adjacent to Rose Cottage were six shiplapped bungalows, two sets of two and two single bungalows, which ran along the Mountnessing Road between the cottage and the Isolation Hospital. Doris's grandparents, John and Sarah Attridge occupied one of the bungalows and her unmarried Uncle Jim lived with them. The Isolation Hospital faced the chestnut tree plantation, which ran along the south side of the road. These trees were used for fencing when the many poultry farms started to sprout up.

Recalling the Isolation Hospital, firmly in the Buttsbury parish, a fence encompassed the whole area in which were at least two buildings, one ward it is believed being for diphtheria and one for scarlet fever. The Matron's quarters were opposite the Gatehouse occupied at one time by the Munts. The parish boundaries were very rigid in those days and you were fortunate to be admitted to the hospital should you live within the appropriate parish boundaries, otherwise you were admitted to the Isolation Hospital in Gt Baddow, which was very inconvenient to travel to. The boundaries also applied to baptisms and marriages and many of these took place at St Giles, Mountnessing as the Buttsbury and Mountnessing boundary ran down the centre of the Mountnessing Road.

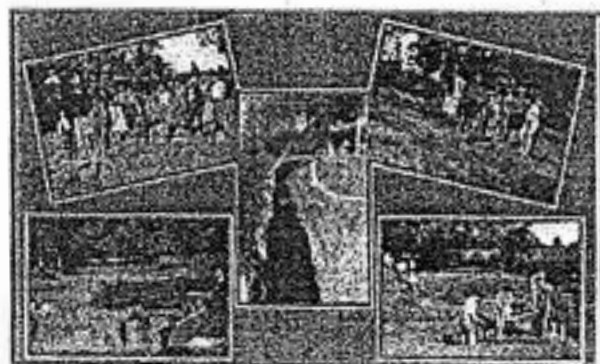
The roads around Gooseberry Green were of a slightly different shape in earlier times with a slight indentation where Perry Street starts, opposite Ricketts Meadow (later known as Bakers Field), now replaced by Ricketts Drive and part of the Radford Industrial Estate. Of course, there was no roundabout then, only a small, staggered, crossroads. Ricketts Meadow is best remembered for the May Day Celebrations that were held there in the 1920's, later being held in the Archer Hall in Billericay. Cricket and rounders were often played in Ricketts Meadow and Grace and Doris recall taking picnics both to there and Buttsbury Wash

where they would enjoy paddling and building a dam in the river. They would pick cowslips, known as 'Peggles' and Orchids – great big bunches – the country name being 'Cuckoos'. They also recall Dusty Flowers who lived at Buckwyns and how fearsome he appeared and had also heard the story that he was 'crossed in love' and had become a recluse. They also reminisced about 'Walking Stick Wood' situated near the River and Buckwyns Chase, but whether it was ultimately harvested to make walking sticks they do not know.

Of the Gooseberry Green area, both Doris and Grace have happy memories. Grace recalls on one occasion when although it was a foggy evening and pitch dark, her father insisting on taking the girls on a short-cut through the meadow. No lighting around then – and you may fall over a cow or two but little else! She recalls her Dad confidently saying "Follow me, follow me" and then nearly falling in the pond, much to the girls' delight! Doris and Grace also recall going off to the woods to pick wild flowers such as primroses and bluebells that were prolific at that time, and not an endangered species as they are now! Trips to Bluebell Wood where they picked wild raspberries and strawberries, and boys finding adders and hanging them on wires.

Of the people living in the area one or two stand out. One was Lizzie Drummond recalled as flying across the fields on her horse, full of energy and enthusiasm. Doris saw Lizzie just prior to her passing away when she looked the same to Doris as she had when she was young! There was also Queenie, whose trees had apples as big as melons. They were extremely good cooks. A name she recalls is a 'Bullace', a small, plum like fruit, with a stone. She also had two lovely pear trees – 'Williams' and 'Cast Iron'. A pond some way from the house was used to throw away used water.

Doris and Grace with her three sisters, Ellen, known as Nellie, Elsie, and Jessie the youngest (who has recently died) enjoyed swimming. Elsie was a great swimmer and was involved in county sports. They had all been involved with the digging of the swimming pool in Lake Meadows and well remember the famous swimmer 'Temme' who, it is believed, opened the pool in 1929. The Billericay Swimming and Social Club was founded in 1931 and a Certificate was presented to Mr W J Parker as a Life Member in 1932. An illustration of the Swimming Badge is given. Another event that they all enjoyed was the Billericay Carnival. Elsie was the Carnival Queen in 1936 it is believed for which Wally Ball served as Chairman for a period of three years.



**DIGGING THE SWIMMING POOL c1929**  
Local Residents – digging the pool



**SWIMWEAR THROUGH THE AGES**  
l-r: Maud Ford Elsie & Jessie Geeves  
Doris Parker Freda Manning Grace Geeves

The Geeves sisters and Doris all attended Great Burstead Juniors, as Buttsbury School was not built until 1930. Grace went on to the seniors but Doris attended the High School at Brentwood. On leaving school, Grace travelled to London where she took up a millinery apprenticeship. This stood her in good stead, as she became adept with her needle, and on the marriage of her daughter Pat, Grace made the dresses for the Bride and brides-maids.

During the 1930's Doris married and just prior to the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War lived with her husband in Hongkong until the Japanese War began when she was evacuated with her young son to Australia until it was safe to return. She returned to England after the War with her young family.

In 1938 Grace married Walter Ball, who had a business 'Ball Plastics' in South Green where they initially lived. Wally was one of six children whose father and grandfather had an Engraving business in London. With his father and one of his brother's, Wally came to this area and started the business in Kennel Lane producing, amongst other things, plastic mouldings for black telephones, egg-cups, beakers and Ford steering wheels. When Grace and Wally's family started to come along, they decided to come to the Perry Street area and bought 15 acres of land together with a little bungalow called 'Little Clearings', set in the midst of Mill Hill Wood, for the princely sum of £1,500. The land extended some way down Perry Street as well as into Mill Hill Wood. Nearby lived the Turmeau family in a cottage called 'Bushwood' which encompassed an area now occupied by Rosebay Avenue. There were then a number of homes scattered along the original Queens Park Avenue.

After the end of the War it was decided that a new house would be built fronting Perry Street. This was accomplished and Mill Hill House emerged together with a swimming pool in the grounds. Sam and Maggie Geeves lived for a short while at 'Little Clearings'.

Wally and Grace Ball held many fund raising events in the grounds of Mill Hill House and special memories recall those fetes etc held for the fund raising for the building of the new Christ Church as well as other events. Mill Hill House has seen further changes during the intervening years. Some years ago it was purchased by the Shaftesbury Society, extended in many ways to give a home to adults with learning difficulties and is now known as 'Anvil House'. Fetes and fund-raising events are still held in the grounds for the residents of Anvil House.

Having lived out of the area for some years, Grace has recently returned to live in Billericay not too far from her childhood friend Doris, and they are able to meet regularly to discuss times old and new.

Buttsbury from the late 1930's  
Horace Road and Christ Church  
Recollections of Bob Jackson



**CHRIST CHURCH CHOIR**  
**St Mary's Buttsbury Re-Dedication Service 1949**

By the time Bob, aged four, moved with his parents from Romford in the late 1930's, to live in Horace Road, the district boundary had changed and the road was in the Billericay UD, although the Parish of Buttsbury still extended towards Norsey Road; Christ Church Mission was not transferred to Billericay from the parish of Buttsbury until the 1950's.

Bob is the eldest of five children, the latter members of the family having been born in Billericay in the 1940's. He remembers vividly the house in Horace Road, which runs between the Stock Road and Norsey Road. There were few houses in the area at that time, and most of the side roads were muddy and overgrown having unmade pathways. Horace Road, however, revelled in a well-worn track as a result of more houses than most being situated in this road, visited frequently by the milkman, coalman and baker each with their horse and cart to make their deliveries. Bob's father was a Butcher and worked for M B Clarke for about 6 months before being called up in September 1939. Prior to that he was a butcher in Romford.

The Bus routes at the time were covered by Eastern National, one being Tilbury to Clacton via all the villages and towns en route, and which used to run twice per hour. City buses ran from Southend via Billericay to Romford and Wood Green but the most popular way of travelling was by 'Shanks pony' (on foot) or, if you were lucky, you had a cycle.

Little traffic passed along the Stock Road, a very occasional car perhaps, so the roads were safer for youngsters to cross on their own during that period and Bob and his brother Derek would set out for school taking the track down Hillhouse Drive, two little boys who had set out in a very clean state but rarely arriving at school so pristine, as they would indulge in a pastime carried out by other children ten years previously, by running along the dry, dusty ditches which were as deep as they were tall, until they reached school covered in dust.

An amusing instance was when, to improve the condition of the surface of the paths in Hill House Drive, cinders were put down and some silver birch branches cut up and planted but, unfortunately, these started to sprout shoots and had to be pulled up again. It was not until the 1960's that Hill House became a made-up road.

Bob recalls that passing along Hill House Drive in the dark was rather a scary event, as there was a huge hollowed out ash tree near to the entrance to the Park, which appeared rather sinister, and imaginations ran riot that someone would leap out of the tree to frighten them, so children always took a wide berth at this point.

An instance which happened during the War was when, going to school one morning, they spied some soldiers who were out on manouvres creeping along the other side of the hedge adjacent to the Park. They were wearing their camouflage uniforms and helmets and carrying their guns and rifles and rather surprised the lads.

Near to Newlands Close, where Bob has lived for the past forty years, was a poultry farm and fields visible between Perry Street and Stock Road with only one house and three little wooden bungalows in the distance and nearby the site of 'Oaklands'.

There were three stagnant ponds where Bush Hall Road now stands, and situated about two thirds of the way down at that time was the sports ground owned by the St Johns School. Bob recalls a doodle-bug came over Horace Road during the war and landed in the area of the St Johns cricket field where it blew up. The footpath from the Stock Road to Perry Street ran directly between them at that time.

Bob was a pupil at Buttsbury School from about 1941 to 1946 and on joining he felt he was already acquainted with many of the children, as there were so few houses and people in the area at that time and you would know almost everyone, so he immediately felt quite at home. Some of the children he recalls are Avril Hardy, Len Atkinson, Victor Broomfield, Donald Hill and Barbara Oliphant.

Miss Corcoran was the Headmistress, her assistants being Mrs D'eath and Mrs Watson (who was in fact still teaching there in 1969 when Bob's eldest son became a pupil at the school). Each teacher taught two age groups per class. When Miss Corcoran first came to the school she did all her own secretarial work and taught as well but, a few years later, she was not only the Headmistress but had a personal secretary and did no teaching. The site of the Infant School and playing field was only a wooded area at that time.

Bob then attended Billericay Senior School (in School Road) for two years before going to Chelmsford Tech for three years which he left at the age of 16. There was virtually no work at all in Billericay and most school leavers went on to either work in Chelmsford for Hoffmanns, Marconi's or Cromptons, or to work in London. When Bob started work at Hoffmanns in 1951, two other Billericay (and Chelmsford Tech) boys, Dennis Jenkins and Peter Cook, started at the same time.

Being boys, football was most important and Bob played for a team in Kelvedon for a couple of years (as a pal at work invited him over) and after that when he was about 20 years, they formed a new team called 'Norsey Rangers' along with founder members David Cripps, David Leas and Derek Jackson, Bob's brother. Eventually the team was re-named 'Billericay Rangers' and after a successful few years amalgamated with 'Billericay Town'.

Another leisure pursuit was The 'Ritz' Cinema which played a big part in the area attracting many of the local teenagers who attended during the weekends, Bob going along with his brother Derek and two friends, Eric Payne and Leslie Kidgell.

### **Christ Church Mission**

The Church Mission had been dedicated some six years previously when the family moved to Billericay and was very functional for the many services and activities held under its roof. Bob not only attended the Sunday School from an early age but, in later years he and Avril Hardy ran the Junior and Kindergarten classes, taking over from Miss Frost who tragically contracted MS. The Teachers classes were subsequently held at her home but, when she became worse, they reverted to the Mission Hut with Bob and Avril. During the 1950's the

population grew tremendously so they also ran the Youth Club providing an important group in which the local teenagers could participate.

There was also a choir of about 14 boys run by Miss Sylvia Knight, an Auxiliary Nurse at St Andrews, living nearby in Woodside Road with her family, and the boys were active members of this group for about ten years. Miss Knight was strict but a good teacher and Bob thoroughly enjoyed learning the traditional hymns, psalms and chants to the 1662 Service. A photo of the choir can be seen at the Re-Dedication of St Mary's Buttsbury after the War, showing the boys with the Rev Foulerton, Mr Moon the Lay Reader, the Bishop of Bradwell, and others.

Confirmation classes were also held by Rev Powley at the Mission but as Bob's parents had been Baptists in earlier times, christenings had not taken place so, prior to being confirmed at Chelmsford Cathedral, they were christened at St Mary's Buttsbury in the presence of their mother, Sylvia Knight and the Vicar the Rev Powley.

During this period Christ Church Mission also ran the 1st Buttsbury Cubs and Scouts Groups, the Scout Leader being Leslie Edwards (Manager of the Ritz, the local picture house) who ran the groups with Gladys Home and Bob was a keen member of both groups later becoming Assistant Leader, eventually amalgamating with a group in the town. Other groups were formed in later years as the population grew and a Scout Hut was eventually erected in 1971 at the rear of the Church. Scouting was Bob's biggest love and he spent 16 very happy years with the 4th Billericay Scout group, memories of which will be related separately.

Together with Don Hunt, Bob became a Sub Church Warden in 1961, which office he held for over ten years. A year previously he had proposed the setting up of a Development Committee to raise Funds for a permanent Church, due to the population and housing growth in the area, which had increased dramatically. Rev David Greaves gave great encouragement and help towards this project. Bob's wife, Joyce, whom he married in 1959 at Little Burstead, was also involved and instrumental in running many ventures and productions to this end.

In 1963 The First Christ Church Council was set up (See the Development of Christ Church) with ten members of the congregation and the elected Officers. The Development Fund grew over the next few years until, on the 12th December 1965, the new Christ Church was consecrated by the Bishop of Chelmsford.

In about 1972 Ted Butt and Geoff Stenton took over the Offices of Church Wardens and Bob enjoyed a less hectic life in the church to devote more time to his own and his family's leisure pursuits. He is Trustee and Life Member of the Billericay Cricket Club and played for them for many years.

From school leaving age at 16, Bob travelled out of the area and worked for 38 years at Hoffmans, the Ballbearing Manufacturers in Chelmsford, initially travelling by bus, bicycle and later using the cars of various friends. When the company fell on lean times it was amalgamated and became known as Ransome, Hoffman and Pollards, but after some years was closed down making everyone redundant, which affected a great number of people in the area. A year later Bob procured a job with the Post Office as a postman and could often be seen cycling around the area giving a cheery wave as he passed. He retired in 1998, having worked for them for eight years, and he and Joyce are now enjoying retirement.

Buttsbury from the early 1920's  
Stock Road/Buttsbury School/Christ Church Mission  
Recollections of Mollie King



**STOCK ROAD, BILLERICAY Post 2<sup>nd</sup> WW**  
Courtesy of Roger Green

Moving from Seven Kings to the Stock Road area of Billericay with her parents in the early 1920's, Mollie lived in one of the original bungalows situated between Hillhouse Drive and Newlands Road, built by Mr Jarvis. Some of these bungalows exist today, one or two fairly unaltered, others extended and some replaced by modern executive homes.

**Buttsbury – 1925-1929 – From the High Street along the Stock Road  
Pre-Schooldays**

Mollie now relates the following in her own words.

"While my parents were looking for a house in Billericay, they stayed briefly with Mr and Mrs Long. Mr Long was a farm worker and they lived in a cottage next to Buttsbury Church. It is still there, but larger now. [Some years later, the Longs moved to Basildon]. Buttsbury was the name of a Parish – no village, let alone a town. Mrs Long was a source of wonder to me, as she knitted socks on four needles with her one useable hand. At that time, I was trying to knit with two hands and two needles!

The move to Billericay from Seven Kings took place in 1925, when I was two. Our house in Stock Road was built by Mr Jarvis, as referred to above, father of Nursery-Man Mr Jarvis. I watched Charlie and Harry the bricklayers working on the house next door, till presently a family with a little boy moved in and other families came along.

We walked everywhere, or I rode in a push-chair. One of my favourite walks was to the bottom of Stock Hill, where the brook ran over the road, as it still does at Buttsbury Wash. This one was Stock Wash. Sometimes we would meet Mrs Perrin, who lived in a white wooden bungalow near Buttsbury Lodge Farm, where Mr Perrin worked. He carried their household water-supply from the farm in two buckets, using a wooden yoke across his shoulders.

My mother shopped at Moor's, near the present Police Station. Our first cat came from there too. He travelled home in a hessian sack on my lap. On another day, the sack on my lap contained wet green walnuts, given to my mother by the woman who lived at the Toll-House. I remember this as a single-storey white cottage, about opposite Hill House, near St John's Road. Its narrow garden, with big walnut tree, ran parallel to the road, and ended roughly near the entrance to the Health Centre. There was a black wooden cottage there, too.

Once we took my broken china doll to the Doll's Hospital. This was a tiny sweetshop, kept by Mr Plummer, in Landon Road opposite Quilter's Restaurant, which was then a school.

Miss Wade sold sweets, and tiny dolls with china heads, arms and legs, and soft cloth bodies. Her shop is now Raven's Bakery. My bob-and-fringe haircut was done by Miss Train (later Mrs Parkinson). Her salon was upstairs in another quaint building – now Hamiltons Carpets. A curtained cubicle for each customer.

The walk homewards up Station Hill would be halted to watch the sand-martins diving and swooping in and out of their nest-holes. The land from Cromwell Avenue to the Station yard belonged to Mr Harris, the builder, and he quarried sand from the hill for his brick-kiln. It looked like a golden cliff, topped by a thin layer of green, and all pitted with these nest-holes.

Next, we passed "The Union" as we called it. We often met two men from there, who pushed a hand-barrow and selling bundles of firewood. They wore thick grey jackets with huge bulging pockets. Sometimes, tramps would be sitting outside the Union gate. Not infrequently, tramps who had spent the night at the Union, and were making their way to Chelmsford Workhouse, would knock at our door, requesting "a drop of boiling water" to put on the spoonful of tea in their can, which they had got from another house, or it might be the tea from us and the water from another house. Never both. Once, a "Lady-of-the-Road" was sitting on our step eating a piece of bread and butter, accompanied by me, likewise occupied. Presently, she leaned over and picked a few Nasturtium leaves growing nearby, to put on her slice. I tried it too. How hot and spicy they were! Well, I like them better now, and use them in salads, and remember the tramp-woman.

Sometimes, other men knocked at the door, usually selling haberdashery. My mother always bought from them, and sometimes talked to them over a cup of tea, and was sad about them after they had gone. They were ex-service men, and unemployed. Years later, during the next war, when things like ribbon, tape, elastic, and sewing-needles were hard to come by, my mother's large stock of these items, bought at the door, were very useful.

Next, on the homeward journey, came Caxton Stores and Printers. Mrs Kettles kept the shop, and I suppose the men did the printing. One of the Mr Kettles was a very versatile man, and did all kinds of things, including sweeping chimneys and playing tunes on a saw. Our Chimney-sweep was Mr Whittaker, who lived in Perry Street. I enjoyed his visits, and had to let him know when his brush appeared out of the top of the chimney. The Oil-Man with his pony called weekly to supply the Paraffin for our cooking and lighting. One winter our lead water-pipes froze and burst, and the "Valor Perfection" oil cooker was brought into the living room to dry out the ceiling. Then we had to go for water to a neighbour who had a well. That well water tasted so good. I wished we had a well.

At that time, we came under the care of Chelmsford Rural District Council, and Mr Cottee, on his bicycle, came at intervals to collect the Rates, and have a chat. He was the Baker in Stock and his sons delivered the bread.

Another childhood friend was Mr Davies, the Roadman. He had a hand-barrow, and swept the road and looked after the verges from Stock Hill to the Railway. He had been a Regular Guardsman, and still had his military bearing. He was always good for a chat.

There were not many cars, and no buses at the time I'm recalling, but during the General Strike in 1926, my Dad, along with other commuters, went to London in Mr Speeds Removal Van. I also remember a lorry passing daily full of building workers – all singing. Deliveries were done by boys on Trade-Bikes, and they were always whistling.

Norsey Wood was privately owned, and well fenced against intruders. However, we could enjoy the sight and scent of the bluebells, either from the Norsey Meadows boundary, or from Norsey Road, as there were fewer houses on that boundary then.

On our Norsey Road walks, my mother was much interested by one house. The name on the gate said "CONISTON", which was the name of the village where she had been brought up. One day, an occupant happened to be in the front garden. Watching the two ladies talking together, it struck me that they both had thick wavy auburn hair, worn in a "bun", so I concluded that there must be a connection! No such thing. The house had been named before the current family lived in it. However, an acquaintance had been made and, in due course, we learned the lady's name was Miss Needham. At that time, she must have been about eighteen, and Mother nearing forty, but to me they were two grown-ups with identical hair!

It was a more formal time – first names among acquaintances were rare – and I can only recall one friend of my parent's who was "Auntie".

Gardens were large, and provided all the play space we needed. The neighbour who had helped us with her well-water had a very large garden. The house was in Hill House Drive, and the little spinney at the far end was where Fern Close is now, so that garden crossed the ends of all but one of all the gardens in Stock Road from Hill House Drive to Newlands. The dividing ditch was dry in summer and was the unofficial and secret route, or den or Wendy-House.

These were some memories of my pre-school days."

### **Schooldays**

Schooldays began at the local Dame School in Hillhouse Drive for a year until the opening of the new Buttsbury School in 1930. The Dame School was run by a Miss Cunningham who, as she was looking after her nephew Bobby whose parents were overseas, educated him and 8 or 9 other children, some of the children going on to attend St John's school, which had opened about that time, and some to Buttsbury County Junior School as it was known in those days, until at the age of 11 years the pupils transferred either to Chelmsford Schools or to the Gt Burstead School in the Laindon Road.

Miss Aylott was the first Headmistress at Buttsbury School and in each of the three classrooms were the Infants, Juniors and Seniors. Miss Claire Evans took over the position of Headmistress at the end of March 1930 and remained there for several years. Recently it was discovered that she is living in a Nursing Home in the Chelmsford area and is not far off her centenary. Miss Corcoran followed. She had previously been a teacher at both the Stock Roman Catholic School and the Gt Burstead School where she taught music and needlework and is believed to have started at Buttsbury about 1939 where she stayed for some years.

Mrs Jones, who hailed from Wales, was also an Infant's teacher at Buttsbury from 1930. She had a daughter Edwina who also attended the school. It is recalled that a small boy died during this period and Mrs Jones showed the wreath to the class as each had given a donation. 'Toy day' was held on a Friday when the children were allowed to bring a toy to school to play with in the afternoon. Miss Rendall taught the Junior section in the middle classroom.

There were separate entrances for boys and girls at that time with a veranda attached to each end of the school building and the boys used the Billericay side and the girls the Chelmsford side. The cloakroom was at the front of the school. Within each of the three classrooms there

were the old type desks in pairs on an iron frame with a seat attached to each desk which could be tipped up when you stood up. The desks had inkwells which had to be thoroughly polished by the pupils, which was an enjoyable task, and anything else which came in sight and needed a polish as well!

For heating, there was a tortoise stove in each classroom. The design of these was a fairly tall metal stove with a lid which had to be lifted with a hooked poker at the top into which the coal was shovelled and a tray at the bottom into which the ashes fell and, when cool, could be removed. Milk was warmed up on this and Horlicks added to it for a hot drink - some children always tried to avoid having the ones with the 'skin on top'. Later of course all the children were given cod liver oil and malt.

The playground was quite small then. Most of the area was long grass which was cut occasionally - the nature garden is situated in that area these days. The toilets were in a separate building across the playground which you had to cross in all weathers and are recalled as 'appalling' - they were earth closets and could not be flushed - about 6 in the girls side, the teachers having one to themselves which was always kept locked. The cesspool was no doubt situated nearby and no doubt added to the 'ambience'.

Many of the children at that time enjoyed going to school 'by ditch'. Some of the ditches were dry at certain times of the year and they had much delight in tramping along these around the area arriving at school in a rather dusty state. There was a picturesque pond at that time on farmland (now the junction of Stock Road with Newlands Road, on the Chelmsford side, then known as Farm Chase). It is remembered as a lovely spot where they had great times playing - there were fallen willow trees and they had exciting adventures imagining them as ships and anything else you could think of.

During this period, huge water pipes had been laid along the side of the roads ready to be immersed, to carry water from Langford it is believed, to the new Dagenham estates and the route of these covered the area from the Bridleway, up Longtail, Orchard Avenue and Perry Street and then on to the London Road. Perry Street was a lot narrower in those days with a ditch on each side of the road and the water pipes were huge - taller than a child and their greatest pleasure was to either run through the pipes or along the tops from home to school.

### **The Church**

Until his death in 1940 The Revd Pemberton was Chairman of the School Managers at Buttsbury School, teaching R E to the school children. Prior to the building of the Mission a few years after the school opened, Church Services and Sunday School were held in the classrooms. As Vicar of Ingatestone with Buttsbury, the Perry Street area came under his charge, and he was instrumental in negotiating for the Mission Hall to be built, known as The Chapel of Ease, as St Mary the Virgin was situated some three miles away making it difficult for parishioners to attend, especially during the winter. The district boundary changed in the mid 1930's when Perry Street was absorbed into the Billericay area, but The Mission was not officially handed over until the mid 1950's when it was joined to St Mary's, Billericay.

The Revd Pemberton was a very generous gentleman and the Sunday school outings were always to his residence in the Fryerning Road at Ingatestone, Mr Patten's blue bus being hired for the occasion to take the children and some of the parents. Tea was given around a big table and then the games were held in the garden near to the stableyard. Revd Pemberton always produced pennies for the winners of the games which were such things as the three-legged race, running, sack races and Aunt Sally - which in those days was a board on which was painted the figure of a woman with a bonnet and long skirt holding a clay pipe in her mouth - and you won a penny if you knocked the clay pipe out of her mouth!

The Mission, known as The Chapel of Ease, is well remembered as it served the community for about 50 years. Built in 1933, it was of wooden construction, set in a large field facing Perry Street, with a front porch, plain wood floor and casement windows on either side. It had a main hall with the altar at one end with a kitchen and vestry on either side. Used as a Chapel for Services and Sunday School, it was multi-functional until the early 1960's, when the new Christ Church building was completed, and used for many functions including Toddlers, Playgroup, Brownies, Guides (Scouts being held later in their own hut at the rear of the Chapel) and harvest suppers, Youth groups and other social events. When the new hall was built in the early 1980's the Chapel was demolished.

The new Christ Church was consecrated on the 12th December 1965 and a new Organ was purchased from the Mission Church of St John, Mountnessing and dedicated at Christ Church on 29th November 1970.

### **The People**

Well-known in the area at the time were two members of Christ Church, namely Miss Elizabeth Mott and Miss Elvira Jackson living not far from the church in Central Avenue. First names, of course, were never used but they are fondly remembered as great friends who helped out when parents went out for an evening, looking after the off-spring for the night. They had been cook and housekeeper in earlier times to a local gentleman and were still living in Central Avenue around 1960.

Also recalled are two sisters called Bright who lived at 'Four Winds' a house situated on the Stock Road, near Buttsbury Lodge, where they lived for some years.

Buttsbury from the early 1930's  
Tylers Avenue and surrounds  
Recollections of Marjorie and Peter Neale

TYLERS AVENUE



THE BUILDING OF 'RICKY' 1930'S



COMPLETION OF 'RICKY'

In the 1930's families from London bought Plot Lands in this area and built weekend bungalows. They built on land without gas, water or electricity, so wells were dug and paraffin was used for cooking and lighting. Marjorie's father, George, although disabled from the 1<sup>st</sup> World War, and his brother, Len, began by digging a 12 ft well before they started to build the bungalow. This they did by hand. Sand and cement was purchased in Billericay and brought home on the handlebars of a bicycle. Transport in the area was scanty and local residents either walked or cycled in those days. At this time there were only tracks, no made-up roads or paths, and streams running across the land. As the roads were mostly unmade in the area until the 1960's there were many ruts in the roads and they laughingly recall that some of the scones that Uncle Len baked, turned out so hard that they were used to fill in the ruts in the road!

Marjorie's family and friends had great fun building the bungalow all helping to prepare the overgrown land. Photographs depict them cutting down the scrub and building the bungalow. The footings were built with bricks, which were purchased locally, and the walls mainly constructed of timbers. It had four rooms with a chimney to the main room and a deck that faced Tylers Avenue.

The land they occupied was part of what was then known as Newhouse Farm Estate. The area originally known as Dirty Hall Farm. As far back as the 18<sup>th</sup> century it was called 'Austens'. Marjorie and Peter live in Tylers Avenue, named after the last occupier of the Farm. Jasper Layland, a local Surveyor and Auctioneer, who occupied premises in the High Street, had initially purchased the Newhouse Farm Estate during the 1920's and sold off the plots to interested parties who wished to build weekend bungalows.

With so little building in the area in earlier times, Marjorie and Peter had uninterrupted views for miles around especially towards Ramsden Heath. The land owned by Marjorie's parents bordered on a hedge abutting a Chicken cum Goats and Donkey Farm, on land now occupied by Graham Close. Marjorie and Peter ultimately later bought adjacent land to their parents where they built their home 'Spindleberry'. The garden was vast with vegetable plots, fruit trees and numerous flowers, admired by all who saw it. It is recalled that when they were making plans to build their own home, the criteria at that time was such that homes could not be built without water, but wells could not be dug until plans were passed, and they had to institute the help of Sir Bernard Braine (MP at the time) who was instrumental in giving sanction for the house to be built.

It was not until the 1970's that Marjorie's parents finally moved from their home in Chadwell Heath to live permanently in their bungalow, next door to their daughter and son in law. From some time after the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, Uncle Len had lived there. He had been a wheelwright and worked at the Stratford Railway Works as had Peter for many years, where they had both trained many of the apprentices. Marjorie's father's main hobby was making model engines etc which are a sight to behold and which are still in working order today.

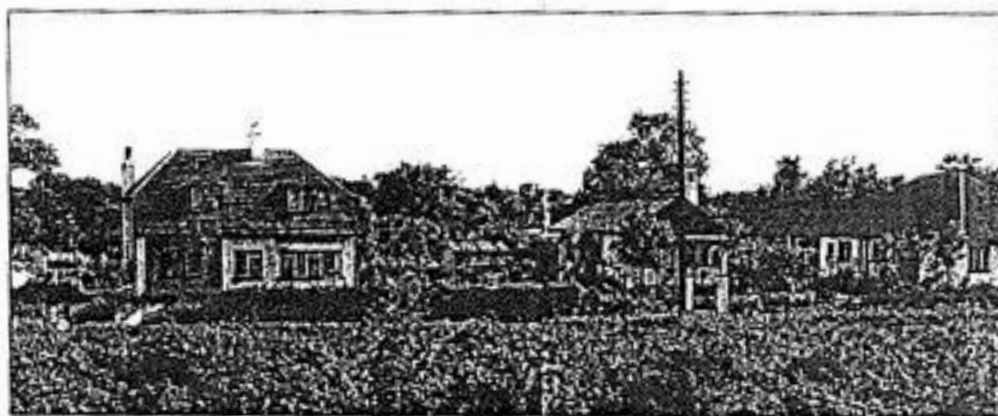
In the 1950's Billericay suffered with severe flooding, as badly as had Canvey Island in 1953. Peter recalls that the water rose to about 5 ft in the Orchard Avenue area at that time and he had to 'transport' their parents through the water when they came to visit. The area had always suffered in this way, and the drainage was only improved in the Billericay area when Basildon New Town was built, this being the criteria for the building of the new town to take place.

Peter and Marjorie have always enjoyed their garden and these days still do as much as they can. They attended Writtle College in the early days and worked towards exams where they had to identify many different types of plants and it is still their main hobby. They always remember the milkman who travelled around the area with his horse and cart. The local residents would come out to collect the 'horse droppings', which as many know, are very good manure for the tomato plants.

#### TYLERS AVENUE - CLEARING THE SITE & HAVING FUN



#### 1954 - 'SPINDLEBERRY' COMPLETED



'SPINDLEBERRY'

-

'RICKY'

-

'WINDSMOOR'