

Radley History Club

Life in Radley in the 1930s and 1940s

Information extracted from interviews in the Radley Remembered series, mostly carried out in [2003 and 2004?]

Archive number:	A.39
Date of interview:	22 June 2003

Personal details pre 1953

Interviewee (complete separate form for co-interviewee if also resident in Radley pre 1953):	GILBERT BAYLISS
Date of birth:	1920 (Oxford)
Date came to Radley (if different):	1932
Address in 1930s/1940s:	Bungalow, more or less opposite Bowyer Arms.
Other family information:	

Education

Schools/colleges attended:	[School name not mentioned, but was in Oxford.]
Other information about education:	Sang in St. John's choir in the evening.

Work

Occupation and place of work of father:	
Occupation and place of work of mother:	
Occupation and place of work of interviewee in 1930s/40s (if any):	In 1930s Bayliss was Special Constable (4 nights, 4 hours a night around Radley, unpaid); then became Sergeant in Abingdon; then Chief Inspector; but organisation of Special Constabulary didn't appeal to Bayliss, and he resigned in 1971.
Information about farm work and farms:	
Other information about what jobs people were doing:	

Travel

Mode of travel to school:	Sometimes train, sometimes bus.
Mode of travel to work (interviewee and parents):	
Any comments about the station and use of the train:	
Any other comments about travel including, including car use and ownership:	

Buildings - location and characteristics

Location of interviewee's home:

[Not mentioned.]

Any comments on size, numbers of rooms, sharing, outside loos, source of water, electricity and telephone services etc of interviewee's home:

In 1932 in Radley, no street lighting, no mains water, no main sewage system. Water was obtained from wells (often pumped up by hand into tanks in roofs); sewage went to cess pits.

Any comments on location and characteristics of other buildings in Radley including dwellings, shops, village hall, barns, laundries etc:

Going up Foxborough Road: 'East End House' lived in by Mr & Mrs Hutchings; next door, Misses Badcock and 'old Mr Badcock' used to sell milk from urn suspended from his bicycle handlebars; then Radley College Laundry where Badger's Cope now is (before that R. College had their laundry done in what is now a crèche in Bagley Wood Road in Kennington). in 1932, New Road did not exist; instead a track led to Mr (Walter) Long's bungalow. No Stonhouse Crescent. No Catherine Close; where C. Close now is, fairs used to be held every year. Walter Allen (of Kennington) built many of the bungalows now present.

Services and pastimes (excluding education and travel covered above)

Comments about shopping including retail deliveries:

Walter Long built a steam bakery in Gooseacre Lane, and sold bread (still hot) from his van (~2d for a loaf in 1935); but his business didn't last for ever. Afterwards he went to South Africa.

Comments on health and health services:

During the 1930s a doctor ran a surgery for a couple of years in two rooms in Mrs Hutching's house.

Comments on play, pastimes and recreational activities - eg swimming in river, pub, clubs and societies, football, darts, guides:

Bowyer Arms was a typical village pub, quite well patronised. In centre of where B. Arms car park now is, there was a forge used by Mr Hook, an ex-Hussars farrier.

Comments on religion, church and choir:

Miscellaneous

<p>Any comments about Radley people not covered elsewhere:</p>	<p>Mr Badcock who had Gooseacre Farm said there were trenches around his property, and wondered whether they were left over from the Civil War. Going into Abingdon on Radley Road, first left-hand bend beyond roundabout was 'Dead Man's Corner', where there was a cast-iron floret cross to a William Potts who died in 1884 or 1886, but by 1945 the cross had vanished. White's Lane is named after a Mr White who had a plantation just north of where White's Lane turns sharp right (but Bayliss didn't know what plants there had been in the plantation). There were two ancient cottages (their backs to the road) just opposite the church. Big house nearby, 'Braemar' [Braeside] was lived in by Mr Gowing (MC) (of Gowing's garage in Abingdon). Vicar of Radley in 1930s was Daly Briscoe, and he had connections with Radley College; he started out as a 'Cowley Father' (essentially a monk from the Society of St. John the Evangelist), and he wore a distinctively ecclesiastical hat. There are three ghosts in Radley: the White Nun in the old vicarage; a coach and horses at Dead Man's Corner; and a man in a putty-coloured overcoat not far from the station who vanished into thin air.</p>
<p>Comments about Radley College, its way of operating and relations with the village:</p>	<p>There were very good relations between the village and Radley College in the 1930s (e.g. with David Goldsmith).</p>
<p>Comments on Coronation and Jubilee events:</p>	
<p>Any information on impact of WW2 in Radley and about wartime activities:</p>	
<p>Record here any other interesting items not covered above and general observations on life in those days:</p>	<p>There used to be a really nice cottage called 'Portsmouth' a few yards from the pond (near the church) opposite 'the dogs'; it had bricked-up window from window-tax times; it had a well in the sitting room (by no means an unknown arrangement in cottages of that age).</p>