

## 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.35  
Date of interview: 15-Apr-03

#### Personal details pre 1953

Interviewee (complete separate form for co-interviewee if also resident in Radley pre 1953):

**JO MCDUGALL**

Date of birth: About 1940

Date came to Radley (if different):

Address in 1930s/1940s: Wick Hall until 1947 and then Neats Home

Other family information: 1 sister

#### Education

Schools/colleges attended:

Jo's mother and the two other girls in the family were taught by governesses. The three boys had governesses at first and then went to Radley College.

Other information about education:

Father had a scholarship to Cambridge but didn't take any exams after the first year as more interested in playing poker. Then did an apprenticeship.

#### Work

Occupation and place of work of father:

He set up a hydraulic engineering business near Coventry with a friend and all his working life commuted there.

Occupation and place of work of mother:

Set up a designer workshop with her sister Josephine, making clothes in the 1920s and 30s in London.

Occupation and place of work of interviewee in 1930s/40s (if any):

In 1967 set up Oxford Aunts care agency with her sister Lou and Polly Hyson.

Information about farm work and farms:

Almost everyone in Lower Radley worked locally - farming and railway. The Deanes farmed Park End, George Badcock farmed Home Farm and Gooseacre after Jo's uncle Stephen gave up farming it. During the war Mr Beck farmed Neats Farm and used one room at Neats Home as a dairy - he brought the milk in buckets on a yoke.

Other information about what jobs people were doing:

Mr Talboys was the Radley College boatman. Bob Godding worked at Radley Primary school. Jack Grimes was the gardener at Wick Hall, he lived in Lower Radley.

#### Travel

Mode of travel to school:

Mode of travel to work (interviewee and parents):

Father commuted to near Coventry, during the war he stayed Monday to Friday in Rugby as shortage of petrol.

Any comments about the station and use of the train:	Lucky to have it and speculation that maybe not lost to Beeching cuts because of Radley College boys using it. Story that Lord Harcourt possibly had the station built. He was rowed over the river and then brought along the causeway (he had it built) by carriage to the station where he got a train to London to go to the House of Lords. The train would be held for him.
Any other comments about travel including, including car use and ownership:	Very few people had cars. Jo has a childhood memory of the sound of people walking to Lower Radley to pick cowslips. In the 1990s Mary Utin was a village character, in her seventies, who cycled everywhere but often fell off her bike. She used to say that she learnt to fall by riding horses.

**Buildings - location and characteristics**

Location of interviewee's home:	Wick Hall during WW2, then Neats Home, since 1985 at 87 Lower Radley
Any comments on size, numbers of rooms, sharing, outside loos, source of water, electricity and telephone services etc of interviewee's home:	Wick Hall had carpets made of army blankets that rose up in the wind. Very cold. Eastbourne college was evacuated to Radley until 1945 and Jo was friends with Lucinda who lived in the Lodge. 2 of the stables were let as flats. Wick Hall had a wonderful garden with a big glassed area and was paradise as a child. Jo's family lived there with her grandparents. They had an Irish maid called Mairi Hayes. The electricity failed often.
Any comments on location and characteristics of other buildings in Radley including dwellings, shops, village hall, barns, laundries etc:	Most people in Lower Radley had lived there for generations and worked locally. The first family that weren't local was perhaps the Wrinch family - Charles taught at Radley College. Lots of change and new houses in the 1950s and 60s. Before then most homes had a privy in the garden and a well, no mains drainage.

**Services and pastimes (excluding education and travel covered above)**

Comments about shopping including retail deliveries:	
Comments on health and health services:	Jo was born in Warren Hospital (now a housing estate) near Norman Avenue on the way into Abingdon.
Comments on play, pastimes and recreational activities - eg swimming in river, pub, clubs and societies, football, darts, guides:	A simpler and harder life. Used to swim in the river and the gravel pits. Skate on Pumney ponds. Musical evenings in the Barn.
Comments on religion, church and choir:	

**Miscellaneous**

<p>Any comments about Radley people not covered elsewhere:</p>	<p>Jo's great great grandfather came from Banff in Scotland to London and made money from trade in spices and pepper (and possibly slaves). He bought Wick Hall in about 1850 -60. Josephine Dockar Drysdale, Jo's great grandmother ruled with a rod of iron. Jo's grandfather listened to the radio news every hour, took his pulse often, was gloomy. Her grandmother was optimistic, founded the WI in Radley. Jo's father was very active in the village after he retired - VoWH councillor, parish council, conservative party. Many names of families and which houses they lived in mentioned.</p>
<p>Comments about Radley College, its way of operating and relations with the village:</p>	
<p>Comments on Coronation and Jubilee events:</p>	<p>For the Coronation Jo's mother made clothes (mostly out of crepe paper) for the procession with a cart up to Radley College. A 'queen' chosen.</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>	