

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.40
Date of interview:	30 June 2003

Personal details pre 1953

Interviewee (complete separate form for co-interviewee if also resident in Radley pre 1953):	Sally Cooper
Date of birth:	1937 (at old Warren Hospital, Abingdon)
Date came to Radley (if different):	
Address in 1930s/1940s:	Home Farm, Wick Hall, until ~1944. Then in right-hand half of tall Victorian pair of houses on Foxborough Road [#75] near Bowyer Arms. (Badcock sisters lived in left-hand side.)
Other family information:	Mother, Barbara; father, Stephen [Dockar-Drysdale; deduced from Wikipedia] Brothers and sister William, Charles, Caroline.

Education

Schools/colleges attended:	Initially small school at Home Farm, then Our Lady's Convent (Abingdon), then Wychwood School (Oxford) as a boarder.
Other information about education:	

Work

Occupation and place of work of father:	Father 'farmed the estate' before going into Army during WW2. It was great-great-grandfather who originally came to Radley (from London) and bought Wick Hall.
Occupation and place of work of mother:	Mother ran small school at Home Farm (included children of Radley College staff). Mother set up Mulberry Bush School in Standlake for WW2-troubled children (initially M B School was in house in Foxborough Road).
Occupation and place of work of interviewee in 1930s/40s (if any):	
Information about farm work and farms:	
Other information about what jobs people were doing:	

Travel

Mode of travel to school:	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:	For 17 years lived with husband and children at Wick Hall while cousin Patrick [Dockar-Drysdale] was in Canada. At time of interview, however, was living in Bampton (moved there in 2002).
Any comments on size, numbers of rooms, sharing, outside loos, source of water, electricity and telephone services etc of interviewee's home:	
Any comments on location and characteristics of other buildings in Radley including dwellings, shops, village hall, barns, laundries etc:	Son Richard converting stables at Lower Farm in Lower Radley into house at time of interview. Brother lives at Park End (at time of interview). With husband lived in Spinney's Cottage (built late 1500s / early 1600s) in Lower Radley (some time before, had beaten earth floor, was divided into three and had housed three families, and was fairly derelict, but uncle refurbished it and converted it into a single cottage). Very probably had originally been bought from Harcourt estate. Reckons oldest bit of 46/48 L R across the road is Anglo-Saxon (was also fairly derelict at the time).

Services and pastimes (excluding education and travel covered above)

Comments about shopping including retail deliveries:	
Comments on health and health services:	Doctor at the time was a Keith Preston.
Comments on play, pastimes and recreational activities - eg swimming in river, pub, clubs and societies, football, darts, guides:	Used to be a village fête.
Comments on religion, church and choir:	Used to sing in church choir, but whilst boys wore red cassocks and sat in the choir stalls the girls didn't wear anything special and had to sit in the pews.

Miscellaneous

<p>Any comments about Radley people not covered elsewhere:</p>	<p>Spinney Comley used to clear the ditches in LR, 'very much a character in village'. When moved to LR, people in LR included Crowthers, Utins, Mattingleys [all, spelling?] (Mattingleys' grandfather had been coachman to great-grandmother Josephine Dockar Drysdale). Double-barrelled Dockar Drysdale name created when great-grandmother (Josephine Dockar, only daughter) married great-grandfather (only son). Now much greater social mix of people in LR than there was, and more contact with outside world (Victor Haynes who used to live in LR had only ever been as far as Oxford (and that only once)).</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>Remembers watching marriage of Duke of E and Queen on the only television set in the village.</p>
<p>Any information on impact of WW2 in Radley and about wartime activities:</p>	<p>During WW2 aeroplane skimmed over Home Farm and crashed in field near road to Abingdon. With brother, used to collect from ground lots of radar-confusing silver chaff released from aeroplanes. Home Guard exercises used to go on all over the fields. Remembers seeing sky red with fires in London and Coventry. Several evacuees (children) came to stay at Home Farm, and some were quite traumatised. But many more evacuees came to stay in the Foxborough Road house. In WW2 there was tea room in Peacock Cottage. Remembers American troops throwing chocolate and chewing gum out of their lorries while driving through Abingdon.</p>
<p>Record here any other interesting items not covered above and general observations on life in those days:</p>	<p>Used to be ferry boat from Radley Boat House; then could walk down river bank to stone-built terraced cottage opposite the island where could get lemonade and Scotch pancakes. Used to be ancient wooden bridge over to island. In 1947, LR was flooded up to Neat's Home; bread and milk were delivered by punt. On the corner of New Road, opposite Bowyer Arms, used to be a sweet shop. Hairdresser used to work on first floor of Bowyer Arms. Three 'rush hours' in LR: wild geese flying in in evenings, horses, and Radley College boys cycling to Boat House. LR 'less agricultural' than it was. Used to be quite a few small farms: Home Farm, Gooseacre Farm, Lower Farm, Neat's Home Farm, Park Farm + several others. Now all farm land farmed by Frearsons.</p>