

# GLAD AND BILL

MEMORIES OF  
LAMBOURNE  
(BUTCHERS) OF  
SHOREHAM-BY-SEA



DECEMBER 2012

***Glad and Bill 2***

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AND  
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DECEMBER 2012



# CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	7
2. SHOREHAM-BY-SEA	9
3. THE LAMBOURNES	15
4. THE CANDYS	21
5. THE SHOP	31
6. THE WAR	41
7. DOWNSIDE	49
8. PARTRIDGE GREEN	61
9. CONCLUSION	69

## SHOREHAM IN CONTEXT



From [www.europeanmapgraphics.co.uk/userfile/mapsproducts](http://www.europeanmapgraphics.co.uk/userfile/mapsproducts)

# 1. INTRODUCTION

For the last two Christmases I have produced illustrated summaries of the letters that Alison and I sent back from the Solomons, as a way of preserving those memories and giving the rest of the family some insight into what those two years meant to us. I always had a vague intention of following this up by writing about other aspects of family history, but doing the Solomons chapters was always going to be the easy (if occasionally tedious) option; both sets of parents had saved just about every letter they received, I had managed to get hold of both collections, and the full set had somehow survived many moves and several major changes in our circumstances. All the material was therefore to hand, and all I had to do was edit (and occasionally censor) it. Volume III, and any that followed it, were always going to be much more difficult, because all I had were disconnected items of correspondence, more photographs than I could handle, with far too little information about what they showed, and a random collection of official certificates which posed as many questions as they answered. Oh, and an unreliable memory.

I therefore set myself the task, before things got even worse, of bringing all this raw material together, putting it into some sort of order so that it is readily accessible, and then using it to give you, my nearest and dearest, an insight into the part of your background of which I am, let's face it, the sole surviving custodian (other than Cousin Jean, of whom more anon). In the process I want to persuade you to take more care than I ever have to preserve the things that matter, and to record your memories before they evaporate. You will lose things, and you will forget things, and once they have gone they cannot be retrieved, however powerful Google and the ever-expanding government database may become. The account that follows is based on what has survived, through good luck and serendipity. It is inevitably ill-balanced and patchy, but – as you will agree, I'm sure - it is the few documents that have made it through that bring the story to life.

This is not going to be a work of scholarship, still less a work of literature. The audience for which it is written is tiny, although in years to come this may well be read by people who will need to be reminded who I am (or, rather, was). Unlike the last thing of any substance I wrote, it will not have to satisfy the requirements of my supervisor or of my examiners, so I am free to make it as idiosyncratic as I want. I can compile tables to my heart's content (which is

## ***Glad and Bill 8***

ironic, because I can't think of any use for one) and only personal pride will save me from unsubstantiated generalisations and unsupported assertions. Nor will it be a work of genealogy. Given the vast number of different options available under the heading of family history, I am more inclined to write a narrative than to solve a puzzle. It seems to me that people who devote their energies to tracing ever-more distant and tenuous branches of their family tree are motivated by the excitement of the hunt and the challenge of the unknown. I, on the other hand, do the quick crossword rather than the cryptic one, and prefer the broad narrative sweep to the painstaking accumulation of detail. Or at least, that's my excuse. You may disagree, in which case you can write your own account, but this one is mine; just bear in mind that I started writing it shortly after my 70<sup>th</sup> birthday, and it would have been subject to errors of fact and judgement even if I had written it when my faculties were at their most reliable, whenever that was.

As far as the format is concerned, my first thought was to continue with the template that I adopted for the Solomon Island letters, but I wanted to include a lot more maps, diagrams and illustrations in this volume, so it makes sense to shift up to A4. Looking at it, it's rather less colourful than I would have hoped, but then photography - and possible life - were generally monochrome in those days. As ever, I will only have a very small number printed, but it will also be freely available for download on demand as a PDF. What I may do, at some point, is to publish it for a wider audience through a local history website or two. This will not be a bid for fame or fortune, I assure you, but an attempt to contribute to the enormous amount of work that is going on among non-professional historians, amateur genealogists and people who simply want to know more about where they came from (given that we cannot know where we are going to).

So now all that remains to be said is: enjoy; criticise; contribute; discuss; remember; preserve; quibble and communicate.

with love

### **Alan, Dad, Dandan**

*Jean and I in her back garden in Greenways Crescent. I have chosen this picture to set the tone of what follows, for two reasons: firstly, because I look happy, in a scruffy sort of way, and that reflects how I felt at the time; secondly because it is an image that has become an integral part of my memory, by dint of being on display on our sideboard throughout my early life, in a double-sided wooden frame (which I wish I still had).*





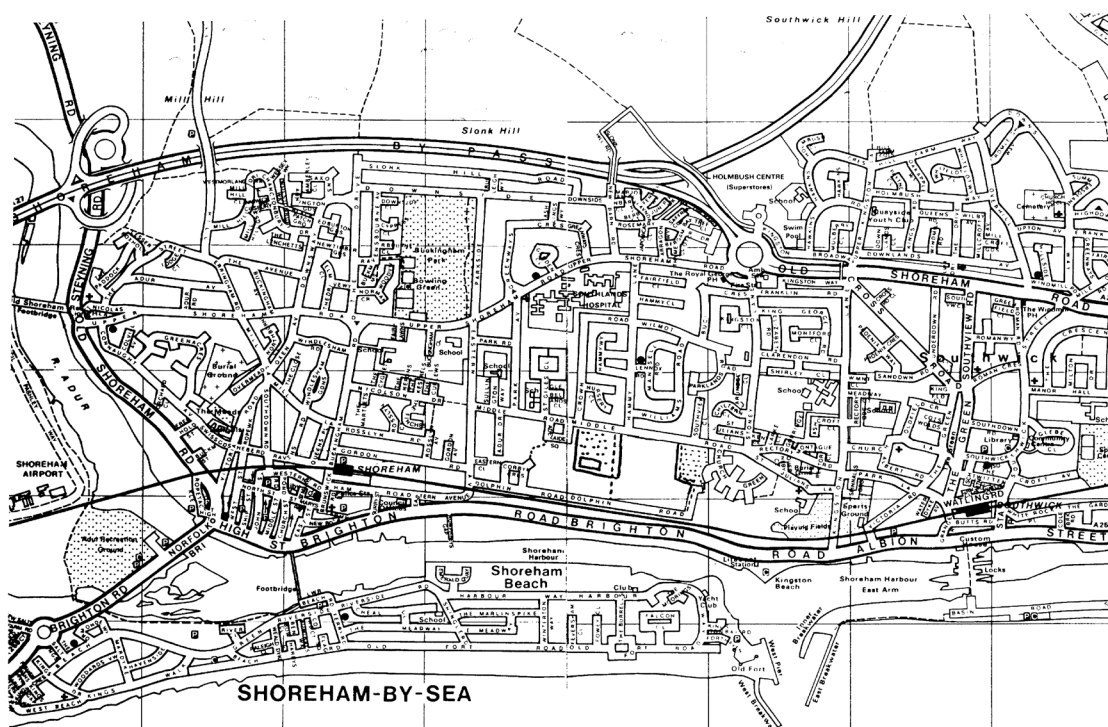
## 2. SHOREHAM-BY-SEA



So where to begin? Someone, possibly Mary Poppins, recommended that one start at the very beginning, but where was that? It would be rather arrogant to begin with my birth; that may well have been my very beginning in a purely temporal sense, but this volume, like all modern history, is based on the assumption that we begin to be formed long before the moment of conception, let alone the moment of parturition. Like everyone else, I am the product (at the infinitesimal, individual level) of the same evolutionary procession of accidents, coincidences, dislocations and dead ends that brought into existence the human race and the planet on which it has taken up temporary residence. Rest assured, however, that I do not intend to explore these various factors in full. I could, of course, adopt a geographical starting point, but even then the choice is not obvious. Certainly Shoreham was the centre of the universe for my first couple of decades, but (as will shortly become clear), it was due to yet another of those many confusions of cause and effect that I was born and grew up in Shoreham. My grandparents came from further east, from Portslade and Fishersgate and Southwick and the various other small communities along the south coast. True, these now run into each other, but that process of amalgamation, of in-filling, has only taken place since my grandparents' time.

Shoreham, then, was special, but only to me, and only because I knew nothing else. The early history of the Shoreham area is unremarkable, and contains more or less what one would expect by way of Neolithic and Bronze Age settlements, Iron Age Hill Forts, Roman villas and the like. In due course it attracted Anglo-Saxon and Norman settlers, and the latter in particular took over and shared out the

*Just about my favourite view of Shoreham, and one I have drawn several times. It is taken from the sea-ward side of the river, looking north towards the High Street, with St Mary's church on the right. The foot bridge, now declared unsafe and replaced by a free bus service, is just out of sight on the right*



Map of modern-day Shoreham, taken from the town website, showing the way the river runs parallel with the shore before turning at right angles to enter the sea; the relationship between the harbour and the town, and the canal running off to the east towards Southwick and Portslade. At the top of the map is the 'new' by-pass and, below it, are Buckingham Park, Downside, Greenways Crescent, Garden Close and Upper Shoreham Road. What poetry.

farming land, built churches and laid out what was recognisably a town. Shoreham benefitted from being the place where the river Adur entered the sea, although the actual entry point changed considerably over the centuries, as long-shore drift built up a spit of land that forced the river to run parallel to the sea, and ever further east. Shoreham's harbour has always had rather more than local significance, and has twice been involved in the glorious arrival or hasty departure of kings, but if you want to know more you will have to do your own research. There are two useful websites and one standard historical work:

- *The Story of Shoreham* by Henry Cheal, originally published by Combridges of Hove in 1921, and re-published in a facsimile edition by S.R. Publishers of Wakefield in 1971. Mum gave dad a copy of this edition for his birthday in 1971 (which I still have), and it remains the only book I can remember seeing him read. It was not a good choice, and he must have found it very hard-going and very unrewarding, as I am sure you will. I admit that both parents dipped into *Lady Chatterley's Lover* when it was finally published by Penguin in the early 1960s, because I caught sight of it in the house as it was passed around their circle of closest friends wrapped in brown paper. That too must have tried their patience very sorely for very little return. We also had a significant collection of Readers' Digest Condensed Books, which were hardbacks, each containing abridged versions of four novels, but I think they belonged to Rosemary (see below), who must have subscribed to an offer of some kind, and in any case no one read them. We took the

*Daily Express*, *Titbits* and *Reveille* (the last two were tame, monochrome equivalents of today's *Hello*, while the first purported to be a newspaper, and was dad's chief source of information and opinions). Dad also read *The Meat Traders' Journal* from cover to cover each week.

- <http://www.shorehambysea.com/shoreham-by-sea-history-portal.html> is a useful, if patchy, site which is part of a much wider collection of Shorehamiana, including reviews of pubs, restaurants and take-aways and useful information about the town for residents and visitors. It also provides access to a digitised version of the Cheal book, at [http://shoreham.adur.org.uk/images/storyofshoreham/storyshoreham\\_0002.htm#4653057](http://shoreham.adur.org.uk/images/storyofshoreham/storyshoreham_0002.htm#4653057)
- there is a lot of interesting stuff to be found if you browse around the random and idiosyncratic site <http://www.glaucus.org.uk/Shoreham.htm>

When I go back to Shoreham now I am struck by how industrial, shabby and grey much of it is, especially along the coast. This is hardly surprising, because the harbour has long been a port of entry for timber, building materials, coal, petroleum products, wine and more recently cars, and so has needed to develop the many and varied facilities required to store, handle and distribute them. Inevitably these tend to be noisy, smelly and unsightly, as well as busy. I can remember going with dad to buy sacks of sawdust for the shop from a timber yard near the harbour, and he also had dealings with Evershed's, who used to collect bones, fat and suet from the shop for use in manufacturing things like soap and glue. There was once a fire at Evershed's yard which was so spectacular that I was woken up and we all drove down to see it. Next door to Evershed's was the grocery wholesaler's warehouse where I had the best holiday job ever, working as a picker for orders. This was rather like doing someone else's shopping, but on the scale of a whole shop rather than of an individual family. Over several years I was steadily promoted until I had unchallenged use of my own electric trolley, and my orders were loaded straight onto a lorry without being checked.



*A view of the harbour at Portslade, showing how far commercialisation had progressed as early as 1930. This photograph was taken by Grandad Candy from the south west window of their house, although - ironically - he was protesting that hoardings were being erected that would obscure their view (see below)*

## ***Glad and Bill 12***

Of course we inevitably have an incomplete relationship with any place in which we live. There will always be bits we do not know, because we have no reason to go there; bits we would never go to, because they belong to other people and we do not feel welcome there. More positively, we also have bits that feel like ours, if only because we pass through them regularly and are familiar with them. I could draw a map of Shoreham with the various areas shaded in different colours according to how warm I felt about them, but even then much of the map would be left vague, incomplete and unexplored. Interestingly, I do not feel the same about Topsham, Wellington or Ashburton, because I have poked my nose into most corners of all three while pushing buggies and walking dogs.

*Bustling Shoreham. This picture was taken comparatively recently and is displayed on the Shorehambysea.com website, although it could have been taken at any time in the last 60 years. It shows the roundabout at the west end of the High Street; the road at the bottom of the picture leads over the Norfolk Bridge towards Worthing; turn left at the roundabout behind the removal van and you pass the site of Shoreham's long departed Ritz Cinema, where Norm and I saw Rock Around the Clock.*

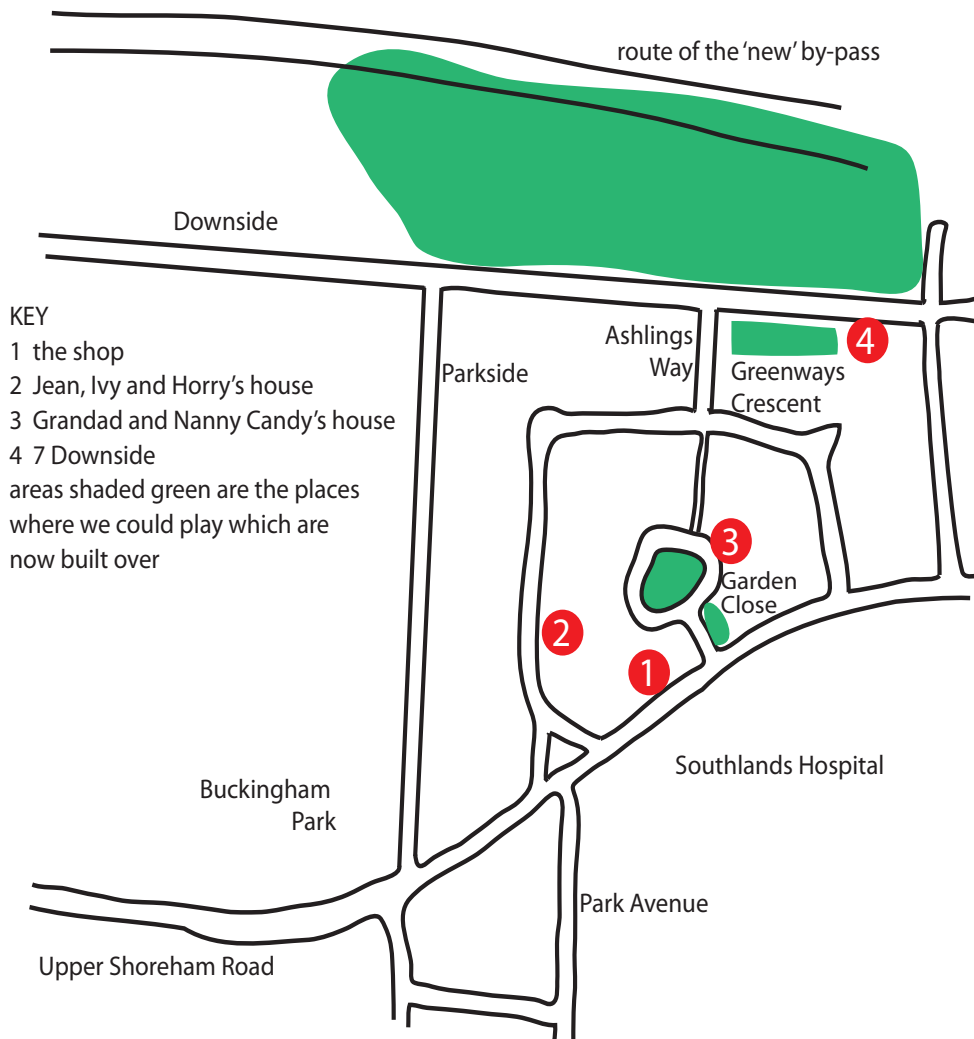


Of course Glad and Bill did not frequent Shoreham much, either. Every Saturday evening they performed a ritual at the kitchen table called 'doing the books', which involved totting up all the money they had taken during the week, and paying any bills that needed paying. Mum wrote out the cheques because she had better handwriting, and dad signed them, although mum was also entitled to sign as W. Lambourne. I think dad was very self-conscious about his writing – as he was about his long name with its many opportunities for micky-taking – and he avoided writing whenever he could, although he did send us several postcards when he once (to my intense surprise) went on a coach trip to Scotland. The parents would then do a quick assessment of their week's performance, get depressed, stuff all the notes and cheques into a strong brown leather wallet, drive it down to the Shoreham branch of the Westminster Bank and drop it into the Night Safe. On Monday mum would take a 21 or 21a bus down town, retrieve the wallet and pay the money in. Sometimes she would have other errands to perform, and sometimes if I went with her we would have

a Horlicks and a Kunzle Cake, but basically you went where you were going, did what you went there for and came back. In any case, going down town normally involved doing something momentous, rather than pleasurable, like going to the Doctor's, or the Accountant's, or (God help us) the Solicitor's, and so you stayed out for as little time as possible. I have no recollection of anyone just going shopping, because you couldn't leave the shop, you didn't really want anything and there was nothing much to buy.

My conclusion is that they came to live in Shoreham for reasons of serendipity rather than deliberate choice, because that's where a shop came up for sale when they wanted to buy one. On the other hand, Glad's parents and brother also lived there, and it is not clear why, when and in what order any of them moved to Shoreham from Portslade or Fishersgate or Southwick. For the most part Bill and Glad's social life centred on their family, and on their very good friends the Adkinses of Partridge Green, whom they met through the shop, and who we will discuss in greater detail later. Here, as at so many other points, there is no way of finding out, and it is too late to ask.

### Our Shoreham





### 3. THE LAMBOURNES



*Frustratingly, the only information I have about this photo is that it was taken in Barnham in 1932. I have no idea what the Lambournes' connection with Barnham was, nor, indeed, do I know anything about Barnham itself, but I am reasonably confident about identifying some of the people in the group and guessing at a couple of others. A is Nanny Lambourne, B is Glad, C is George and D is Aunt Mill. E could well be Grandad Lambourne, and F could possibly be Ada.*

Bill's parents lived at **25 Whiterock Place, Southwick**. I have clear memories of the house, because I used to catch the bus from outside the shop to go and see **Nanny Lambourne**, by myself, as usual. I got off at Southwick station, where presumably someone met me and walked me up to the house. She was a small, thin woman with a large and elaborate bun arrangement at the back of her neck; this, I took for granted, meant that her grey hair was very long,



*Bill and Glad in fancy dress outside 25 Whiterock Place, Southwick to celebrate the 1935 Jubilee, and Nanny Lambourne at Windy Ridge in her pinny.*

but I never saw it down. She always wore a type of pinny that I have not seen on anyone else before or since: they were made of cotton with a small floral print and piping and wrapped around over her chest, although I am not sure how that worked because I never saw her without one – nor, indeed, one of her pinnies without her. They emerged from the middle ground between martial arts jackets and Oxford scholars' gowns, while being nothing like either.

I don't remember **Grandad Lambourne** at all, and – significantly - do not have a pet name for him, but then he did die when I was 5. I have learned that he was a chimney sweep, and that he mended shoes as well; I can remember seeing soot in their garden, and a complicated metal object like several iron feet fixed at right angles to each other that he used in cobbling. At some point, some how, I have picked up that he had a contract to row across the canal in Shoreham harbour to open and close a sluice gate, so I suspect he got by by collecting odd bits of work rather than by doing a job.

The house was tiny, and there was a range in the downstairs room which was very ornate, very black, very comforting and very complicated. There was an outside toilet, the seat of which was a wide plank with a hole in it; I don't know what sort of technology it used, but I can't remember it flushing. The toilet paper was improvised, and hung on a string from a nail. I have no idea what rooms there were upstairs, and no recollection of ever going up there, nor whether there was a best room at the front of the house. By and large, though, my memories



are pleasant if unspecific; I am confident in saying that I enjoyed the food that Nanny Lambourne gave me and that the house was warm and smelt good. One other memory, which may or may not be trustworthy, is of milk being delivered down the street by horse and cart, and of neighbours vying to collect any horsy leavings. Like many memories this may not be real, but instead the result of me internalising what I have been told, or what I have seen in photographs. Indeed photographs may well be more real than memories, because they are physical objects, and therefore constant, and because we often revisit the same ones over and over again.



*Uncle George on active service overseas during World War 2.*

There are a several mysteries about the Lambourne household. Firstly, Dad had a sister, **Aunty Ada**, and a younger brother, **Uncle George**, who vied with each other for the title of supreme black sheep of the family. On balance the duel was almost certainly won by Ada, given that she was actually scary and did damage to her immediate family, rather than simply being a bit sad (or sadly being a bit simple?). Ada married a man called Lind, with whom she had three girls and a boy called Frank. The relationship did not last, and all of the children except one were taken into care. The exception was **Cousin Rosemary**, who was taken in by Nanny Lambourne and became part of her household, and subsequently (as we will see) of my mum and dad's. I have no idea why she was chosen over the others; we stayed in intermittent contact with the other girls, and memory tells me that they grew into happy and conventional adults. Ada, on the other hand,

### ***Glad and Bill 18***

was chiefly remarkable for reappearing from time to time while we lived at the shop to cadge money, to the extent that on one occasion I offered her, and she accepted, some of my pocket money. I also remember her giving me a story book which offended my dignity because it had babyish pictures and large print, at a time when I was a fluent reader, who borrowed books from Shoreham public library on his way home from primary school.

For his part, George did not marry until comparatively late in life. He was a sad, lonely, shabby figure, and the lenses of his glasses were as thick as the bottoms of milk bottles. He helped Bill with the garden at Windy Ridge, when there was a huge amount to be done to tame the wilderness, and was presumably paid and fed for his efforts. I do remember that on one occasion he was sitting in the kitchen at Windy Ridge and I nearly hit him from the garden with a pellet from an air rifle that Grandad Candy had given me. The most surprising aspects of that episode are (a) that Grandad Candy had an air rifle to give me, (b) that I was allowed to have it, and (c) that the window still had a hole in it when we sold the house after Grandma Shoreham's death. George is described on his various certificates as a groundsman and a council labourer, but one other thing that those certificates have taught me is that he was definitely Bill's younger brother. For some reason I developed the theory several years ago that he was the illegitimate son of **Aunt Mill**, who, I imagined, was left with child by her childhood sweetheart who then went off and was killed in the first world war.



*Aunt Mill, looking so normal I may well have been doing her an injustice all these years.*

## ***Glad and Bill 19***

The resulting love-child was brought up, my story went, by Nanny Lambourne as her own, in a touching demonstration of working class solidarity and domestic flexibility. In fact Aunt Mill, or Millicent Emily Caroline Ethel May Lambourne (1891-1966), was a spinster of (presumably) blameless character who worked as a housekeeper. My dominant memory is of how unpleasant it was to kiss her, as it was often my duty to do, because her cheeks were so soft and podgy that I was presumably worried about traces of them sticking to my lips. She was predominantly mauve, smelt (quite rightly) of lavender, and at the time of her death she had become a hoarder, surrounded by empty cat food tins and old newspapers. In a letter written in November 1966, shortly after she got the news of Aunt Mill's death, Cousin Rosemary mentioned 'the beautiful things she used to make (including) the dolls clothes she made for me and then took back when the doll broke'. For his part George seems to have attached himself to a succession of older women, and eventually married Alice Lucy Butcher in 1967, when she was 80, although she died shortly afterwards. George, on the other hand, lived on until 1999.



*Dad and I rowing on the canal at Southwick, with the power station in the background. It is difficult to explain what is going on or where we are going. We are VERY smartly dressed (witness my parting) and dad has a tie on. Mum must be with us, because otherwise there would have been no photographer. Very odd, and it rings no bells. Perhaps that's the sort of thing that passed for a leisure activity in those days.*



## 4. THE CANDYS

One of the stories I most regret not knowing is the one about how my parents met, fell in love and married. There was clearly a social divide between their families, the Candys being comparatively posh, not least because Grandad Candy had a salaried job in an office pushing a pen, rather than an ill-defined series of humble manual employments. He worked as a time keeper, or



*Grandad Candy's parents, on the left: he was called Albert George Candy, and was a foreman/fitter, probably at the Gas Works. The photograph was taken in March 1927. There is no date on the photo on the right, which is of Grandad and Nanny Candy, but my suspicion is that it could be quite early and that they always looked old. Nanny was born Alice Mabel Corney and she and Grandad married in August 1910 in Southsea, where she had moved from Portslade*

## ***Glad and Bill 22***

clerk, at Portslade Gas Works, which he reached by crossing the canal on a little ferry boat which was sculled with a single oar over the stern. Grandad became quite adept at rowing in this way, and took the oar when I went with him to his office to help as a little kid, for which I was presented with a couple of coins in a proper wages envelope. Grandad was a stalwart of the Portslade Gasworks bowls team, and represented them very successfully at home and away for years.

Somewhat different processes came into operation when it was time for Glad and Bill to leave school and start work, in that his dad took him round to a number of local business and he was eventually taken on by a butcher. Glad, on the other hand, found a job in a chemist's shop, which offered her at least the prospect of becoming trained, getting promotion, wearing nice clothes and never getting her hands mucky. My impression is that her boss and his wife became very fond of her, and she certainly spoke very warmly of them. It is possible that they were the Cecil V. Brumwell and his lady wife, who replied in a typed letter to an invitation to an "AT HOME" at 7 Downside on Thursday June 1<sup>st</sup> 1961. Mr Brumwell wrote that 'Mrs Brumwell with her womanly instinct says it must be your Silver Wedding Anniversary but I simply cannot believe it is 25 years since you got married.'



Grandad Candy, or **Dandan**, was a dapper, handsome, popular man with wonderful handwriting, a sense of humour and a set of encyclopaedias which I used browse through while sitting on his lap, holding his ear lobe. He was an early and enthusiastic photographer, and a keen and effective gardener, with the wonderful habit of picking a tomato from his greenhouse, cutting around the calix with the smaller blade of his stainless steel penknife, pouring salt into the hole and then handing it to me or Jean to eat. He made rugs with Readicut wool and ready-printed woven backing sheets, and went through a phase of making his own butter by tirelessly shaking the cream from the milk in a special container. He shaved with cutthroat razors which he kept sharp on a leather

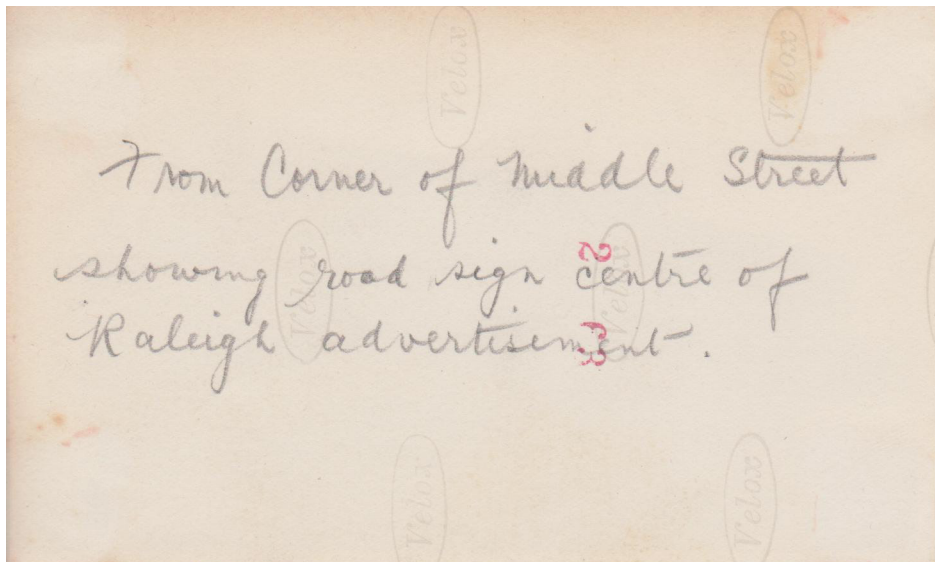
strop. It was in his garden that I rode in the wheel barrow and in the clipping box of the lawn mower, picked apples and greengages straight from the tree and stuck a fork through my welly boot, narrowly missing all of my toes.



*Grandad, Rex and I  
outside 24 Garden Close.  
Or at least I think it is me.*

Dandan it was who treated all woes and ills with Germolene or Gee's Linctus depending on whether the problem was external or internal, and it was with Dandan that I went to the Methodist church in Shoreham on Sunday mornings, and by coach to Scotland as a reward for passing the eleven plus. He was also a skilled and enthusiastic DIY-er before the term was invented, although he did shock the family by starting screws by tapping them with a hammer. He also embarrassed me once by sending me to Mr Dawkes the Chemist next to The Shop to get three-pennyworth of magnetism. He and Nanny Candy had a wonderfully scruffy dog called Rex, who hated suitcases because it meant they were off on one of their holidays, several of which brought them (minus Rex) to the South West. Grandad also seems to have had a stropky campaigning side, which I discovered when I came across a series of photos he had taken to illustrate the horrendous impact that the erection of some advertising hoardings along the side of the main road had had on the views from their house in Portslade.

When he died, in November 1970, I wrote to mum and dad from Enfield College of Technology where I was working to say



*He was a gentleman, and has always been an example to me of how to behave towards other people. I shall always remember his kindness, his gentleness and his cheerfulness and the enormous amount of love which he inspired other people to feel towards him. I remember too, how all my friends when they met him would immediately and naturally adopt him as their Grandad, which at the time made me feel jealous, but looking back was a great compliment to him; and to us.*

**Nanny Candy** has made much less impact, and has left far fewer memories, to the extent that when I started writing this I could not remember her first name (if indeed I had ever known it). She was, I think, somewhat large, tidy, warm, but a little stern; a good cook with a way of draining fried fish on one plate upside down within a larger one. I must have spent a lot of time in her company, because they probably did a lot of babysitting while mum was looking after The Shop, and we may even have lived with them during the war years. Perhaps Dandan's department was play and Nanny's discipline, or perhaps she



died comparatively young, whereas he was there with me throughout my most impressionable years.

They lived at **24 Garden Close**, just behind Upper Shoreham Road, in a bungalow that originally had gas lighting, with temperamental and fragile mantles and gas taps on the wall. They must have moved there when it was first built, between 1935 and 1940, because there is no Garden Close in *Kelly's Directory of Brighton, Hove and Preston* for 1935, but in the 1940 volume, Horace Arthur Candy is listed at number 24, Horace Arthur Candy Junior at **32 Greenways Crescent**, and William Lambourne, Butcher, at 270 Upper Shoreham Road. We will never know the sequence of events that led to the three families moving to Shoreham and taking up residence within half a mile of each other, but that is what happened, and that's where they stayed, albeit with a bit of shuffling around, in that Bill and Glad moved from the shop to Downside, and Ive and Horry moved into Granddad's house when he moved next door to 34 Greenways Crescent (see below). Nor is it clear why the third sibling, Uncle Arthur, did not join in the movement West - but I am getting ahead of myself.



*24 Garden Close decorated for the Coronation in 1937*

When Dandan and I came back from our coach trip to Scotland we were met, to my complete bewilderment, by **Maxie**, who I only knew as Aunty Ive and Uncle Horry's neighbour in Greenways Crescent. It turns out that she and granddad had been courting, and they were married around this time (1954), presenting me with an uncle, **Alan Maxwell** who was only a year or so older than me. Alan had an older brother, who made much less impact, because, unlike Alan, he was no longer living at home. It is to Alan that I owe my introduction to modern jazz, skiffle and early rock and roll, for which I will always be grateful. Granddad moved in with Maxie and Alan at number 34, which I remember chiefly for the heavy draught-excluding curtains over the door into the sitting room, the enormous treadle sewing machine that occupied much of the room, and the early television on which Granddad watched Songs of Praise when he gave up

## ***Glad and Bill 26***

walking down to church. One other memory that I treasure is of my mum saying, rather daringly, that Maxie had complained to her that Grandad (then in his 80s) was rather too insistent on enjoying his conjugal rights.

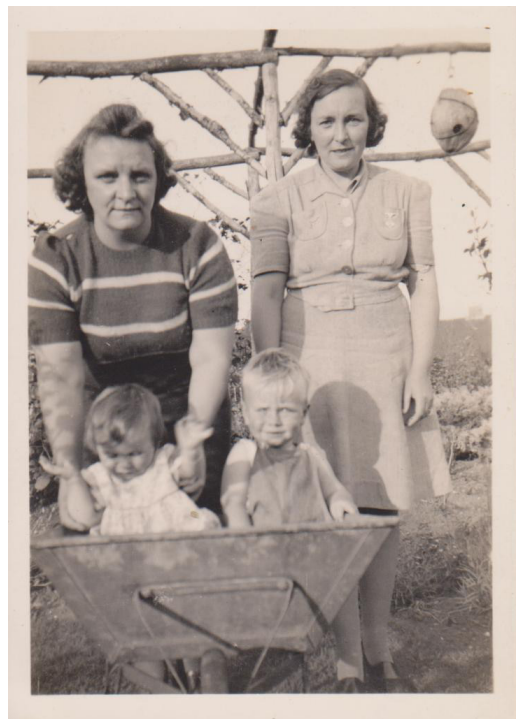
*Grandad and Maxie's wedding photo, inscribed on the back in his handwriting 'To Gladys, Bill and Alan from Maxie and Pop, 18th September 1954'.*



Mum had two brothers, Horry and Arthur of whom I have the warmest memories. **Horry** married **Ivy**, whom he met while on holiday in her home town of Haslemere, and who had beautiful relatives with glamorous names like Cynthia Posnett, who in turn had parents called Jim and Jimmy, to my intense confusion. Horry and Ivy adopted a daughter, **Jean**, who was the nearest I ever had to a sibling, and whom I loved dearly except for the one month in the year when she was the same age as me. I can remember two cats with magnetic bases that were kept on the metal box that caught their post when it came through the letter box, several birthday parties at their house which involved treats and games, and the hush that was obligatory while the man on the radio read out the football results for Uncle to write down in the columns provided in the *News Chronicle*. Uncle Horry worked at Portslade gasworks for more than 45 years as a sign-writer and sheet-metal worker, and later moved to Southlands Hospital as a painter and decorator. In the war he served in the RAF as a flight



*ABOVE: Arthur, Gladys and Horace. BELOW: Ivy and Gladys with Jean and me in Grandad's garden*



## ***Glad and Bill 28***

mechanic. Ivy started work in service and then worked in catering, spending some time with the school meals service, and her war years as a munitions worker.

Ive and Horry had nasturtium plants in their back garden in Greenways Crescent which attracted swarms of black and yellow striped caterpillars, and distinctive tastes in home decor and in music which endeared them greatly to me. They were the first members of the wider family to get a TV, in time for the Queen's coronation in 1953, and they bought a radiogram with a sapphire stylus at a time when my dad's used steel needles. Everybody needs a real or adopted uncle and aunt to act as a counterbalance to their natural parents, and I spent hours at Jean's listening to pop music, watching TV and not being criticised. Ive and Horry enjoyed decorating their home, and did so repeatedly, whereas Glad and Bill saw it as a once in a lifetime activity. Not only did they change their décor from time to time, but they invested time and money in the process, to the extent that they shocked everyone by spending 15 shillings a roll on some flocked wallpaper for their hall. The two of them expressed their undoubted artistic talents in decorating remarkable cakes to order and as surprises. Aunty Ive died unreasonably early, and Horry stayed on at 24 Garden Close, remaining dapper, active, and helpful, both in undertaking charitable work for the blind and in running around after his little sister.

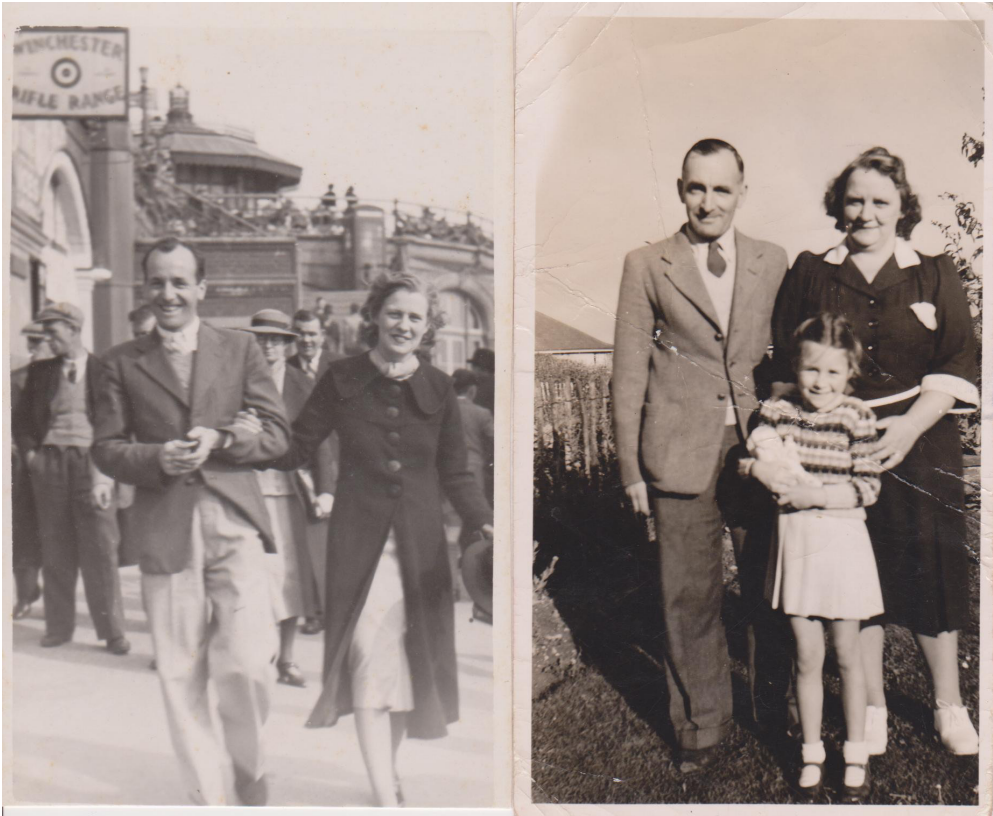
*Greenways Crescent, when it had just been developed as a 'Shoreham Garden City', which is a bizarre notion on so many levels. 'Kingston', on the other hand, does make sense, because our end of Shoreham was properly called Kingston-by-Sea, as dad's business card demonstrates (see below).*



**Arthur** was the youngest, and was a bit more out-going than the others, to the extent that he played in semi-professional dance bands and married the comparatively glamorous (and possibly flighty) **Gladys**, with whom he had two children, David and Nicola. Gladys was known as Gin-and-It Candy, because her favourite drink at the various family parties was Gin and Italian Vermouth, a lethal combination which quickly rendered her tipsy and therefore noisy. Unlike the rest of the family they did not move to Shoreham, but stayed in Portslade, where I can remember visiting them for bonfire night on at least one occasion. Whereas Horry had a steady job, Arthur was doing less well in office work, and



*ABOVE: in Jean and Eric's back garden after we had driven down from Devon in Sue's Honda Civic. Horry and Arthur are in the back row. BELOW: Arthur and Gladys on the left, and Horry, Jean and Ivy on the right*



***Glad and Bill 30***

so he and Glad decided to emigrate to Australia. Eventually they decided to come back, whereupon David eventually became a doctor and then a Professor of Paediatrics or some such in Chichester, Nicky raised a family, Glad went decidedly off the rails, and Arthur eventually left her, escaping from the conjugal home in Worthing or Lancing through a window at the dead on night. He set himself up as a bachelor back in Portslade, and he was reunited with his siblings, to good effect.

## 5. THE SHOP



Bill and Glad were married on 1 June 1936, when they were both 23, at St Andrew's Church, Portslade on Sea. On 28<sup>th</sup> January 1936 they had put down £2 as the deposit on a house at 10 Old Barn Way, Southwick which was being built by George Comber of Hogarth Road Hove, and on 1 April 1936 Bill received a letter at Whiterock Place from Mr Comber's solicitors confirming the purchase of 10 Old Barn Way for £615, with completion 'on or about the end of May 1936'. Mum and dad always spoke very fondly of Old Barn Way, and I am fairly

### ***Glad and Bill 32***

sure that I was taken to see it, although I can remember nothing about it. They certainly did not live there very long, because on 2nd August 1939 they put down a deposit of £5 towards the purchase price of £100 for the business of Smith and Co at 270 Upper Shoreham Road, Kingston by Sea. On the same day Glad wrote out a list of 'fittings included in the purchase price of Smith and Co' which was signed by Mr Smith and Bill and endorsed by the former with the note 'All this equipment was supplied when opening shop and has all been paid for'. These items included a marble slab in the window, electric lights and globes, steelyards, a desk, knives, a sausage filler and 2 bicycles. I am confident in saying, however, that this was a lease, not a purchase, because I have come across a solicitor's bill of 4 October 1955 in relation to 'preparing and completing Lease ... for a term of 21 years at the yearly rental of £225'.

*Dad's business card. This is fascinating for several reasons: first, this is an early example with the telephone number given as '343'. The number was changed to 3343 when the exchange was enlarged and the extra digit was carefully written in on all the other cards I've seen. Secondly, the address is given as Kingston-by-Sea, and thirdly there's no mention of anyone other than W. Lambourne. And I have always liked that very odd 'families waited upon daily'.*



Eventually mum and dad did buy the property outright, and then rented it to Bill Slugg (see below) when he took on the business when they retired in around 1977. The last stage was for it to be sold to Cherry Meats, Winner of the Sussex Sausage Making Competition, whose arrival was marked by a full page spread in the *Worthing and District Advertiser* on 29<sup>th</sup> March 1989. This article says that the 'shop has been completely stripped and re-furbished. It has taken much hard work and a lot of money but the result is a most attractive shop inside and out with two fresh meat counters and a delicatessen counter'. That must have made mum feel more than a little hurt, and dad would have turned in his grave had he known that the new owners were proposing to sell 'a tempting range of new-style cuts, such as stir fry, minted lamb, sweet and sour pork, tandoori chicken – plus extra lean cuts for healthy eating.'

The shop formed part of an unremarkable parade that was presumably developed to serve the expanding housing estates in that part of Shoreham. In the 1930 *Kelly's Directory* there is no mention of Downside, Garden Close or Greenways Crescent; in 1935 there are several dozen houses in Greenways Crescent, no Garden Close, but a fruiterer, a dairy and a newsagent in the relevant section of Upper Shoreham Road, while by 1940 the Candys have moved into Greenways Crescent and Garden Close and there is a full range of shops between numbers 266 and 278 Upper Shoreham Road, namely a greengrocer, a chemist, a butcher,





*This photograph is fascinating because it would seem to confirm that the shops were redeveloped at some stage. The building facing us was called the Pewter Pot Cafe and I used to take lunch there if I was working at the shop on a Friday. It subsequently became a Ladies' Hairdressers, the younger staff of which attracted and terrified me. Southlands Hospital is on the left, and ours was the second shop down, after Mr Dawkes the Chemist, and before the Grocer's cum Post Office, Jimmy's the Greengrocer, Holes and Davigdor, Hygienic Dairy and Mr Snelling the Newsagent. But why no traffic and no people, given that the shops are open because some have got their blinds down?*

a grocer cum post office, a ladies' hairdresser and wool store, the dairy, and a newsagent. What is more, some houses are listed in Downside for the first time. What may well have happened is that the original small group of shops was replaced by a 'proper' shopping parade; this must have taken place shortly after 1935, otherwise the Smiths would not have had time to set up their business and then sell it on. Certainly the shops would not have taken long to design and build, given the extreme plainness of their appearance and the rudimentary nature of their construction, with their metal window frames, thin walls and absence of amenities.

Next to the main door into the shop was a front door to the flat above it, which I remember opening one winter (probably the notoriously severe one of 1947) to find that there was drifted snow half way up the doorway. A long, narrow hall led to the kitchen downstairs at the back, which was heated with a small stove. I can't remember what cooking facilities there were, but there was definitely a 'modern' dresser with a front that folded out to form a table. On one occasion the dresser fell on top of me and it was this table that prevented me from being crushed, although, to be fair, I suspect I was climbing on it and pulled it down on myself. There was a back door leading to the outside loo, which had neither light nor heating, although the loo definitely flushed, unlike Nanny Lambourne's. There was a flat area we called the bricks, with French windows into the back of the shop and stairs up to the garden, at the top of which there was a garage.

Upstairs there was a front room that was only ever used on special occasions, although I do remember playing there with a friend and making a submarine with the dining chairs, which suffered a certain amount of damage. That was probably one of the occasions when I was slapped on my bare arse by my dad

***Glad and Bill 34***

and sent out of the room. I also remember unwrapping Christmas presents in the front room; for several years running I got a pop gun, and one year – despite clear warnings - I fired it rather too often during the King's Speech on the radio, whereupon I was dragged into their bedroom, smacked and told to stay there. The rest of the upstairs consisted of a bathroom and two bedrooms; originally mum and dad had the larger back bedroom and I had the small one at the front, which was illuminated by the headlights of cars going up and down Upper Shoreham Road. When Grandad Lambourne died in 1947, Nanny Lambourne and Rosemary came to live with us, and they took over my bedroom, while I moved in with mum and dad, except when I was sleepwalking.

*The shop decorated for two different patriotic events. The upper picture shows me on guard outside on VE Day, and incidentally reveals a temporary sign over the window. The lower picture has the full W. Lambourne & Son sign, but I'm not sure what event was being commemorated.*



The lay-out of the shop did not change much before Cherry Meats took over, although there was a bit of an upheaval when a new walk-in fridge/freezer was installed in the Back Room. I also think Bill and Glad had a new display cabinet fitted in the front window at some point and made a few other changes, but



*Maybe not the best photograph in the book, but it does give an impression of how much snow we occasionally had and how uninteresting the garden at the shop was. Its use also reveals that I do not have very much choice of images at this stage, while I do have a lot to say.*

then they did have the shop for close on 40 years. The front door was always open, although they did shut at lunchtime and on bank holidays (unless, of course, a customer came up with a hard luck story which necessitated them being served on Boxing Day, for example). There was a cash desk in one corner of the front room, where mum or grandad or I would sit and take the money, enter things in the ledger, and answer the phone. The back wall of this cubby hole consisted of a door into the flat, but this was never opened. We always answered the phone by saying 'Hello, Lambourne, Butchers', and at first I thought we were speaking to the people from whom we bought our meat, rather than announcing the name of our business. There was no till, just a wooden drawer with circular depressions of various sizes to hold the various denominations of coins, and an old handbag hanging on a hook to hold the notes.



*This is a bit clearer, but still not a good photograph, and I have no idea who the other children are, who is bending over at the top of the garden, or why we are all wearing wellies. I am, however, reasonably confident that that is me second from the left. That is certainly our garage, too, in which the shop bikes were kept, but probably not the car.*

There was a supply of pieces of paper which mum made by tearing up envelopes on which we wrote down orders and kept a running total of what people were buying. The two Bills, and occasionally mum, would keep up a conversation with whoever they were serving, and call out the price of each item as it was weighed; the skill of the person 'taking the money' was to tune out the badinage, which could be repetitive and embarrassing (especially to a snobbish Sixth-former at the Grammar School), while never missing a price, since asking them to repeat themselves was both unprofessional and very annoying.

*And this is me in the same garden at The Shop, wearing a cowboy outfit that mum had made for me from recycled sacking. The bolero was very skilfully embroidered, albeit with flowers rather than appropriate Western motifs, because that was all she could do with any confidence, but I was mortified when one of our customers pointed out that I had the Ministry of Food logo across the seat of the trousers. I can say with some confidence that I am packing a cap pistol.*



The second Bill was **Bill Slugg**, who worked for mum and dad for as long as I can remember. Originally he lived in Bramber and commuted, I think by car, but when we moved to Windy Ridge, Bill and his family moved into the flat. His wife was called **Peggy**, and she used to work for Mr Snelling in the newsagents at the end of the row. Bill also had a part-time job there, marking up the papers early in the morning so that they were ready for the paperboys to take out at breakfast time. Bill and Peggy had two children, **Barry and Jennifer**, and Bill had a brother, **Wally**, who raised pigs, chicken and turkeys on a small-holding somewhere on the Downs in the shadow of Devil's Dyke. Wally fed his pigs on swill that he collected from shops and restaurants around Brighton and then cooked up in huge coppers. He always had a fag in his mouth, and he smoked Old Holborn which he rolled into unusually fat cigarettes. These he never took out of his mouth once they were alight, and he smoked them down until they were less than a centimetre long.

Every Christmas mum and dad spent hours at Wally's small-holding killing and plucking birds; mum was by far the best at wringing their necks because she had a good touch, whereas dad would occasionally decapitate the bird, which was a disadvantage when they were on display in the shop. Christmas was a time of even harder work than usual and even higher levels of anxiety. Every week Dad worried about what he would have to pay to buy in stock when he went to

the abattoir on Mondays, and then about what he should charge his customers for the various cuts. The *Meat Traders' Journal* was full of reports from markets around the country, and carried articles suggesting formulae for setting prices, but dad's method was rather less scientific, involving hours spent chewing the inside of his cheek and fretting.



*And this is a very rare photograph of all three of us in the garden with one of our succession of cats, most of which were called Stripecy Tiger and lost their lives on the Upper Shoreham Road. The last in the line, Mickey, survived and moved with us to Downside. Mum is posh, Dad could not be, and I am possibly a cowboy again.*

At Christmas the problems were compounded by the difficulty of assessing how much to order, how to get adequate supplies at a reasonable cost and how to ensure that the meat stayed fresh and looking good until it was collected. The weather played a huge part in this because there was not enough room in The Fridge and so much of the stock had to be kept on open rails in the shop. Then there was the associated difficulty of deciding when to draw the insides out of the poultry and get them ready for the oven: too early and there was a risk of them going off; too late and there was not enough time to get them ready for the rush to collect them on Christmas Eve. One thing was absolutely certain and that was that the festive season inevitably meant a huge amount of extra work, worry and stress, without ever seeming to generate any compensatory surplus income. Added to which dad would always set aside a particularly nice turkey for us to have and then sell it to one of those customers with a hard-luck story, who had not been able to order one of their own at the appropriate time, or had been let down by some other member of their family.

The Fridge took up most of the Back Room at the shop. It was big enough to walk around in, and had a huge door with a fascinating and complicated fastening device that made a most satisfying clunky, sighing noise when it closed. It had a large freezing compartment at the back, in which dad would stockpile things like legs of pork in the run up to Christmas (when they were probably defrosted and sold as fresh), and there were rails on each side on which various joints of meat were suspended on stainless steel S-shaped hooks. One of the worst injuries that a butcher could suffer was to dislodge a joint while reaching for something behind it, and then for it to come to rest with the hook lodged in his outstretched arm. The fridge also contained a tub for salting joints of beef, and a bowl in which sausage casings were left to soak. These were bought in as skeins of dried animal intestines preserved in salt and had to be reconstituted before they could be filled.

Thurs 6 <sup>th</sup> Nov 1970		
Mr Williams		21 7 6
Rump Stek		4 4
		<u>11 10</u>
Mr Munday		
2 L. Chops		3 2
broucher		
Paied	12 ozs Skin	
Mr Loke		<u>3 4</u>
8 ozs J Stek		
Miss James		21 8 3
1 lb or Check		3 6
		<u>11 9</u>
Donald		
2 sm P. Chops		7 5
1/2 lb Mince		
Miss Southey		
3/4 Mince		4 2
2 lbs C. Stek		15 0
1/4 " Kidney		1 6
Norman		<u>1 0 8</u>

Book-keeping, W Lambourne style. The orders have been written in by Grandad (who was nearly 85 at the time), and the prices entered by mum (in L.s.d.). When customers paid the item was marked Pd, or it was carried forward (Fd) and added to any subsequent items. It usually worked fine.

Dad's sausages were rightly famous, due in part to the quality of the meat he used, but also to the recipe, such as the inclusion of dried sage in the pork variety. Armfuls of herbs were donated by customers from their gardens, hung up to dry in the Back Room at the shop, and then 'rubbed down' by mum and me, leaf by leaf. The beef sausages were much plainer and therefore cheaper, and so never taken home for our own supper. Both varieties came in two sizes, big ones and chipolatas, and were made using the same red sausage filling machine that came with the business. At one end was a nozzle (with a thinner one for chipolatas), onto which the casings were slipped like very long, open ended condoms, while at the other was a handle which one turned to squeeze the sausage mixture down a cylinder, through the nozzle and into the casing. The undoubted skill in sausage making lay in ensuring that there was effective coordination between the arm turning the handle and the hand controlling the speed at which the casing left the nozzle containing its load of sausage mixture under pressure. The long strips of sausage then had to be tied in a very specific way, and to a very specific size, such that there were 8 big sausages to the pound.



*Mum and Dad posing in the back garden at the shop, to show off their posh 'get-ups'. The photo is not dated, and the event is unrecorded, but in 1951 they attended the Worthing and West Sussex Meat Traders (sic) Association Annual Dinner and Ladies Evening on Monday 19th November, and (even more grandly) a St George's Day Dinner and Dance at the Savoy Hotel, London on 23rd April as the guests of John Connell (Bromley) Limited*

A high proportion of the shop's turn-over was generated by orders which we delivered to customers by bike and by car. These were either one-off orders that people phoned in, or standing orders, where customers relied on us to send them a different joint each weekend and a range of items during the week. One or other of the two Bills delivered by car every day except Monday, and two delivery boys and I did a round each on Saturday morning using heavy, unstable, sluggish, gearless trade bikes with large wicker baskets over the front wheels. The orders were stacked carefully in order of delivery into the baskets, and the skill of the delivery boy then lay in keeping his bike upright, keeping the items in the various orders together, and making sure that the meat arrived looking good. The key to success was the ticket describing the contents and destination of each order; this was fixed in place using a Krinkum Krankum ticket pin, a 2 inch long sword-like object made of a single bent and folded length of stainless steel wire.

A delivery boy had two main fears: the first was that you would arrive at a

***Glad and Bill 40***

customer's house and not have the items required to make up their order as detailed on the ticket. This was thoroughly unprofessional, and usually involved a long ride back to the shop to replace whatever was missing, together with the inevitable inquest about what you had done wrong. After all, as the mantra had it, 'The customer is always right'. The second was much more infrequent but intensely scary when it did happen, because it involved being stopped by an itinerant Weights and Measures Inspector. He (invariably he in those days) would weigh and check every item in your basket; if he found fault with your orders on any one of a dozen different grounds he could then call down the wrath of the local authority on your ever-fearful proprietor. This was why the ultimate disaster was for your top-heavy bike to fall over, for the contents of the basket to be mixed up, and for the presentation of the meat spoilt.



*Just about exactly the sort of thing, although I don't remember the saddles being that well sprung. From <http://www.hembrow.eu/delivery.html>.*



# 6. THE WAR

The sale of Old Barn Way and the purchase of the shop must have been a scary and exciting step for the recently-weds to take, and you would think that they would have thrown themselves into getting to know their customers, building up the business, and settling into the flat. Other people, however, had different ideas, and a month later, on 3 December 1939, war was declared against Germany, and the National Service (Armed Forces) Act 1939 was enacted, introducing full conscription of all males between 18 and 41. Earlier that year the Military Training Act had been passed, which laid the foundations for a conscription process by requiring all men between 20 and 21 to register in June 1939 for service in the 'Militia' (<http://nigelef.tripod.com/recruittrain.htm>), and the first intake under this scheme was in July 1939. Bill's war record shows that he served in the Royal Regiment of Artillery from 2 September 1939, but he would have been too old to be required to register in the Militia, so he presumably volunteered.

ARMY FORM W5258  
**11981**

If you send this card by post do not fail to enclose your address.

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AND  
RECORD OFFICE,  
EDINBURGH, L. 7.

**RECORD OF SERVICE**

OF

No. 923901 Rank Cpl. Name LAMBOURNE William John Thomas  
(In block letters)

Served in Regts/Corps as follows :

	Regt./Corps	From	To	Assn. joined with date	Remarks by Assn. (if any)
a	<u>R. A.</u>	<u>2.9.39</u>	<u>24.5.42</u>		
b	<u>A.C.C.</u>	<u>25.5.42</u>	<u>24.1.44</u>		
c					
d					

Date 30 OCT 1945

For NOTES see reverse.

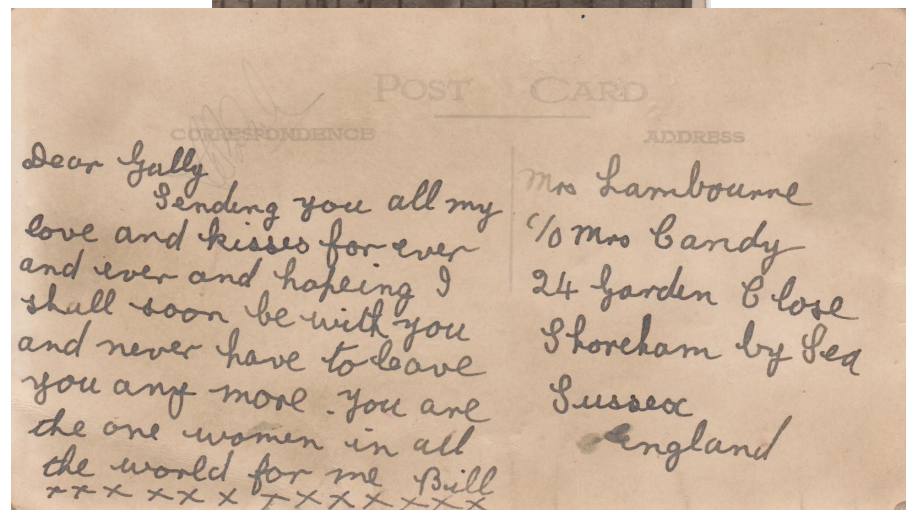
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*C. H. Woodall*

Dad's war record card

**Glad and Bill 42**

Given the speed at which big bureaucracies move even at time of war, he must have offered his services some considerable time before the outbreak of war, and therefore very soon after the purchase of the shop. Another possibility is that he was already a member of the Territorial Army, but I don't remember hearing that mentioned and I have no one to ask. I do, however, seem to remember being told that he was based near home at the beginning of his military career, possibly even in Buckingham Park in Shoreham.



Dad's was not a glorious military career; in six and a bit years he rose only to the rank of Lance Bombardier and then to Corporal, which as I understand it amounts to just one step up above Private and was presumably the standard reward for survival. I also get the impression that he managed to avoid danger fairly effectively, even though he did travel extremely widely, through Africa, Egypt and Southern Europe, while managing not to have his mind broadened. He was certainly in Egypt in May 1943, because the telegram mum sent him via

Cairo to mark their forthcoming wedding anniversary has somehow survived. On the rare occasions he mentioned his travels it was usually to make somewhat derogatory remarks about the people he saw, such as the Ay-Rabs sitting in their tents with their sewing machines, but then I guess a conscript army in war time is not the place to go to learn about the finer things of life. Certainly he spoke with affection of the friends he had made, and of Monty and the Desert Rats and the Eight Army. Some time after the war he joined the Eight Army Veterans Association and went to their meetings and functions and Dinners and Dances, although he had transferred half way through his war service to the much less glamorous Army Catering Corps. He did speak on occasion of driving a lorry in a convoy and he had certainly been taught to drive by his boss when he first started work. My impression is that the army saw his value as a driver rather than as a butcher. Unfortunately I have not been able to confirm the details of his service via the various websites that give access to military records; there are several Lambournes on offer but not the right one.

Before going overseas he seems to have spent quite a while in England presumably under training, during which time he was able to come home on leave from time to time. I have a letter that he wrote from 478 Battery, 113 Field Regiment, Burnham House, Claydon near Ipswich on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November (no year given), in which he looks forward to spending 'seven whole days and nights' with his dearest darling wife, and advises her to 'get all the sleep now you need, you might not get much when I do get home'. Interestingly in this letter he talks about mum 'getting Old Barn Way all ready for your weekend which I am sure you will have very soon now', and goes on 'won't it be nice at Old Barn Way on a Sunday morning at about 12'; this implies that she was not living at the shop when this letter was sent, so she may well have moved in with her mum and dad once Bill had gone overseas. This idea is supported by a post card that he sent to mum c/o Mrs Candy at 24 Garden Close, to say that he was hoping to 'pop in' the following day; according to the postmark this was posted in Winchester on 28th October 1941.

Mum had no choice but to take over the running of the shop, helped by a retired butcher called Ted, who may have come from Southwick, and whose surname may have been Harmsworth. All the meat was rationed; each butcher received an allocation from the wholesalers, which mum collected from Shoreham using a trade bike; this was then parcelled out to individual customers according to the size of their family by the butcher with whom they were registered. Inevitably there was a significant bureaucracy, with ration books being issued and marked, and stamps being cut out and presumably handed in and counted up. This system remained in place into the 1950s and I can remember having to take coupons with me when I went along the road to the sweetshop.

Dad touches on the issues involved in the same letter:

*I am so glad you had a good week at the shop last week, it is so good to have such a wonderful wife looking after everything for me. I just dont know what I would do without you, you are such a darling and all I pray and think of all this long time we have been parted is of coming home again to you for good. I will try my hardest then when this rotten old war is won to make it all up to you for everything you have done*

**Glad and Bill 44**

*and are doing because I am sure you will carry on and manage to keep everything under control until that day does come when we all come home again with our wives for good and never have to leave them on there own again. Darling don't forget to explain about the shop and everything if they should try to call you up and get Mr Snelling [presumably the newsagent along the road] to see about it for you.*



*Mum and her staff outside the shop. The chap on the left is Uncle Ted, but I am sorry to say that I have no idea who the other man is. The windows of the shop have been taped up so that the glass will be less of a danger in the case of blast from a bomb. The harbour and airfield at Shoreham must have been minor targets, but there was always the danger of a German pilot losing his way or wanting to ditch bombs anywhere rather than take them back home.*

It is equally clear that there was no thought at this stage of starting a family, although dad does say in the same letter, following a rather obscure reference to a swimming pool being built in or near the back garden at Old Barn Way:

*if you have got a little girl or boy of our very hone I shall have to keep going to see if they have falling in or my wife will keep worrying me I wont get a min peace while I am indoors.*

In the next letter that has survived (or been preserved?), however, things have definitely moved on. It is dated Tuesday 14 July, and Bill is looking forward to coming home on leave again, although this time he says

*It will be lovely when I am with you again for a little while and better still when I come home to you and our baby one day soon for good my*

*love it cant be so far away now my sweet darling.... It is so good to hear that you are still getting on OK at the shop. I do hope you will be able to manage to carry on for the babys sake as well as ours but I know my darling you will always do your best for all three of us; you are the best woman in all the world and I know we will make up for this long parting one day soon when all the world is at peace again. Getting the new ration books done before I come home will be a good job done with wont it.... I can hardly wait for next week to come, every morning I wake up I think another day toward when I shall be with you, only another 5 days to wait my sweetheart Darling I do hope there will be room in bed for me.*



*I have always loved this photo, and I think it was one like this that dad had with him throughout the war. My suspicion is that it was taken at the time of my christening, hence my elaborate robe, and I also suspect that mum kept the robe in the hope that it would come in handy when she had grandchildren. I am particularly taken with mum's dress, and also with the armchair, which survived long into the Downside era, during which time it was re-upholstered at least once. It was extremely uncomfortable to sit in and unpleasant to the touch, and was probably a Utility item, that is to say, manufactured to a government specification designed to keep prices down so that people could afford to buy the necessities.*

Presumably that was written in July 1942, between my conception in February, and my birth in November, and we have a birthday card that he sent mum in August 1942 from Ipswich, in which he speaks of them both getting a good Xmas present, and tells her' to keep smiling until we meet again'. The last letter we have is dated 13<sup>th</sup> March ; he does not specify the year, but it could be as late as 1945. In it I am mentioned by name for the first time: 'I am looking forward



every min of the day to that day of days when I can come home to you for good, what a meeting when I see yourself and Alan together for the first time'. He goes on:

*I don't think we shall have another winter apart, I wont even mind putting up with those cold feet of yours, you will have to get Alan used to sleeping in his cot, don't you think, or else I wont get the chance of making a fuss of you, I am only thinking of you mind. Glad to hear my mum and dad are a bit better. I'll soon buck them up once I get home, I expect you will want some getting in hand again after all this time, doing just what you like .... I know I shall think the world of Alan from the start, I am allways trying to make up my mind what he must look like. Have you got those pictures of yourself and him yet... I don't expect it will take Alan and myself long to get to know one another, that's if is mother don't mind she might get jealous if she is not taking notice of, you know what these women are like. I expect to get into trouble over something or other after the first day or two as gone by. I do think you have made a good job of everything my pet you must be the most wonderful woman in all the world, will try to make it all up to you one day soon when I get home, it will be the best job I ever had. I know there will be a lot that wants doing, still we will get over that OK I expect.... I bet I will feel strange being with you again after all this while. I wont be able to believe its true, the first morning I wake up and find you by my side. I shall think I am dreaming. Don't forget to let me know how you get on with the auditor. So you will be glad to get everything settled before your sleeping partner comes home as long as you let me sleep I wont mind*

These letters give a welcome, if painful, insight into the confusions and tensions that Bill was feeling, and hint at the issues that would have to be resolved when

he got home. After all, he was a man with no formal education to speak of, little life experience, and all the standard thought-patterns of his class, gender and period. He had been carted off around the world to fight for King and Country and possibly, in the process, to see and do uncivilised things. He had started a business and a family, but then been kept away from both for the best part of four years, while his little wife was apparently making a decent fist of being a homemaker, mother and breadwinner. His family had been functioning for years without him, and he had no knowledge of the detailed workings of his business.

According to his service record card he was not demobbed until 24 January 1946, although we have a telegram dated 21 October 1945 saying 'ARRIVED NEWHAVEN EXPECT HOME MONDAY=BILL' (which is how telegrams spoke). I



can remember going to Brighton Station to meet him, an occasion that (in my mental newsreel, at least) was dominated by an enormous red setting sun. Make of that what you like, you Freudians and Symbolists. Whatever followed may well have been traumatic for at least some of the participants, but I have no memory of upsets. After all, whatever followed became, by definition, my normality. One thing that dad could uniquely offer, however, was the prospect of having a car. He says in the letter from which I have already quoted at length, and presumably in answer to a question that mum has asked:

*I don't know what kind of car we will get it just depends what kind come on the market we shall have to wait and see I am afraid. I expect we shall have to wait a little while before we get one to let things get settled. I do expect to be home not later than six month after the war is over.*

As it turned out they got a maroon Ford van, registration number HPX 756, which had no heating; vents like vertical letter boxes in the foot wells at the front for ventilation, and a dipper switch for the headlights in the middle of the floor at the front of the car behind the gear lever. It was mum's job to operate

### ***Glad and Bill 48***

this – the nearest she ever got to driving a car. At this stage petrol was also severely rationed, but butchers were entitled to a fairly generous allocation of petrol coupons, so we were able to get out and about, but mainly in the direction of Partridge Green, to collect rabbits to supplement the rationed meat. It took a long while for conventional supplies to get back to normal after the war, and dad bought in somewhat exotic lines in order to have something to sell. I well remember Irish sausage meat arriving in large sacks, and whale meat in enormous slabs of a uniform chestnut colour. The convention was that people bought this for their pets, but we had our doubts, suspecting that some customers ordered ‘pieces’ for their dog that they diverted for human consumption. In fact there were families to whom dad sold top quality meat at pieces prices as a form of unspoken social service. At a time of rationing a reliable supply of unrationed rabbits from a country gamekeeper was treasure indeed, and sometimes there were so many in the back of the Ford that Rosemary, Nanny Lambourne and I were pushed forward onto the edge of our seat. But more of Partridge Green later.



*From <http://www.witpg.org.uk/annualshow2004.htm>. The right sort of thing, although ours was maroon, did not have the spare wheel on the door, and had windows in the side. When the car was on official business dad put The Boards inside; these had the name of the shop very nicely painted on them by a sign-writer. It suddenly occurs to me that that sign-writer might have been Uncle Horry.*



## 7. DOWNSIDE

Whatever the difficulties dad faced on re-entry, and however many things he had to worry about, things obviously went right eventually, because at some point in the early 1950s Bill and Glad decided to have a house built so that we could move out of the flat above the shop. Occasionally I have wondered whether dad would have liked to have moved to one of the posher parts of Shoreham, to Buckingham Road, or the western end of Upper Shoreham Road past The Park, for example, but on balance I don't think he would have been entirely comfortable among solicitors and bank managers and businessmen. He never showed any inclination for social climbing or self-aggrandisement, being content with the likes of the Worthing and West Sussex Meat Traders Association. Although a natural Conservative, he did not join any political groups, or Chambers of Trade, or secret societies, and remained steadfastly non-middle class in behaviour, life-style and aspirations – except that he did commission a house which, if it was not in a posh part of town, certainly drew on a posh aesthetic.



*Windy Ridge in the course of construction, and already satisfyingly bigger than its neighbours*

The architect was (inevitably) a customer, called Mr Farmer, who lived in a bungalow in Park Avenue, just round the corner from the shop. I clearly remember draft plans being dropped in for approval and comments, as well as the hurt disbelief when the initial proposal, involving a very large and imposing window occupying just about the whole depth of the front of the house, was rejected by the planners. The house as built was remarkably badly designed, and hugely wasteful of space, although it probably achieved its objective of being impressive (at least from the outside) and of providing the largest room to which anyone in the wider family had access without going to the expense and trouble of renting one.

*Party At Windy Ridge. Cousin David and I are first and second from left, mum and dad are standing at the back and Rosemary is sitting in front of mum. There are lots of people I don't recognise, but Annette is leaning forward on the right wearing a white blouse, and that's Aunt Doris on the extreme right. Note the serving hatch, sideboard and dart board in the left corner, and the curtains that do not quite cover the draughty French windows. Note also the uneven levels of the tables and the sauce bottles.*



This meant that our house was the undisputed venue for all family parties, of which there were many. It was not unknown for more than twenty people to sit down to Christmas dinner at a variety of tables of various heights strung out along the middle of the room, and with many unsuitable objects being called upon to act as seats. Dad would insist on a roast being served with all the trimmings, focussing on whatever bird or joint had been left over at the shop, and every menu included mum's *pièces de résistance*, namely Brussels sprouts cooked to destruction, and sublime, crispy roast potatoes. The other thing dad insisting on was giving up his and mum's bed and mine so that people could stay over, and every Christmas Eve mum dad and I slept on a mattress in the corner of the lounge by the French windows, with me agitating to be allowed to open my presents, and mum exhausted by the Christmas rush at the shop and by the prospect of spending Christmas Day preparing and cooking vegetables, tending to a roast of some kind and washing up.

Between the roast and the cold supper there would be games, such as a Beetle

**Glad and Bill 51**

Drive and Housey Housey, a darts competition, and dancing to 70rpm records played on the radiogram with its steel needles and clunky auto-changer. The dances would run the gamut between sedate ballroom favourites such as the Valeta (look it up on YouTube), at which Grandad Candy excelled, and slightly more raucous items such as the Gay Gordons and the Hokey Cokey. A significant amount of alcohol would be consumed, cigarettes smoked, food cooked and washing up done, and at some point there would be a sing song around the piano, which was led either by mum (who played from music) or Jimmy Adkins (see below) who could play anything by ear, with a drink within reach and a fag in his mouth. Everything (in retrospect at least) seems to have been very good natured; I can't remember many serious arguments or fallings out, but then I was probably either oblivious, or off having a superior Sixth-former sulk and/or a fag.



*Early days at Windy Ridge. The photo top left probably shows Downside looking east, that is, towards Brighton, although I am a bit puzzled by the high banks on the right, because there were some bungalows there. The second photo shows us having a picnic in what was to become our garden, with Uncle George on the right. The bottom image is of dad and A N Other working in the front garden, with the Chalk Pit on the other side of the road.*

## ***Glad and Bill 52***

The site on which the house stood was proportionately large, but the road was unadopted, and there were very few other houses there when Bill started building. In fact most of the town north of the Upper Shoreham Road was open countryside or farmland, a fact that was made full use of during both world wars. In 1914 a tented village was built to house thousands of troops, but it was turned into a quagmire by heavy rain, and had to be replaced by huts which were opened in 1915. When the time came to make a garden at 7 Downside we had to remove several large blocks of concrete that had been used to support the frames of the huts, and found many personal items such as bullets, coins and buttons. During WW2 heavy anti-aircraft gun emplacements were built in what is now suburban Shoreham, while the houses in what was called Bungalow Town on Shoreham Beach were demolished, and various obstacles to invasion such as barbed wire and mines installed.



Our house towered over the three or four bungalows between it and the corner of New Barn Road to the east, which also consisted of bungalows, and when the developers caught up with us and filled in the rest of Downside it was with bungalows. Subsequently, when they built a new road parallel with Downside and called it Slonk Hill Road, that too had bungalows on either side, where previously there had been a chalk pit. In that chalk pit another of our customers had a small-holding, where she raised a variety of animals, including goats, and kept a pony or two. She lived in Greenways Crescent, at the other end from Ive and Horry and Maxie, and had gradually established a path that went through her back garden and up to her land on to the Downs; unfortunately much of the length of this path became incorporated in our back garden and so she had to go a longer way round. For a while my friends and I built camps in the chalk pit and in the land to the west of the house, and while the bungalows were being built we had the run of the building site.

The house must have been built in 1952 or so, because it was around the time

that I went to the Grammar School. As well as being satisfyingly bigger than anything around it, it also had some very special features, namely parquet flooring in the lounge (although that did bulge up in a couple of places due to rising damp), a Rayburn in the kitchen, a serving hatch from the kitchen to the dining area, a Through Lounge with French windows at one end and a bay window at the other, a coal shed and a larder outside the backdoor to the kitchen and an integral garage.



*Dad and Sam in the lounge, so sometime after 1972, which is when we moved to the Solomons and Sam moved to Shoreham. Behind Dad is the Venetian blind which was bought to keep the draughts and the sun at bay; he is sitting on the armchair (now re-covered) that appears in my christening photograph, and Sam is sitting on one of Grandad's rugs made using the Readicut system.*

Whenever we mentioned The Lounge it always had a capital letter, but I think it was the Rayburn of which Bill and Glad were most proud, and before we moved into the house we used to go up and light it and warm up pre-cooked rolls in the oven. On it Mum cooked the best soup I have ever tasted, in a huge, heavy cast-iron saucepan with a very long handle. It's is of course possible that she only did this once, but I vividly remember not only how good the taste was but how it changed as she added new ingredients and replenished the old. Most of the time, however, mum's cooking was simple, quick, and based on grilling or frying whatever meat dad could spare from The Shop. Very occasionally, however, she made a sublime steak and kidney pudding, or a suet pastry roulade (not that she called it that) with bacon and sage. I could never decide whether these were better in their original format, or fried up the next day. For special occasions she would make fairy cakes, with the top sliced off, cut in half and replaced like wings in a dollop of butter cream decorated with hundreds and thousands, glacé cherries or green angelica.

There was a downstairs toilet by the front door (with – bizarrely - a window onto

### *Glad and Bill 54*

the front porch) and a separate toilet and bathroom upstairs. Dad colonised the downstairs loo as the only place he would smoke indoors, while on the window sill were kept two first aid manuals produced by the St John's Ambulance Brigade, of which both parents seem to have been enthusiastic members in their youth. I spent hours reading about how to apply bandages to various parts of the body without ever acquiring any information that was of practical use in the long-term.



*The kitchen at Windy Ridge in its Late Period. Not much remains from the earliest phase, although the serving hatch, glass fronted cupboard above it and the cupboard inside the door are original, as is the curved oak settle end visible on the right. The boiler has replaced the Rayburn, and the island unit is standing where Mickey's uncomfortable armchair used to be. The floor is covered with a plastic carpet substitute that used to make the feet of children's babygrows filthy within minutes and would burn your feet if you walked on it too quickly. The Formica-topped table is just visible on the right. I cannot remember a viable picture ever being displayed on the portable TV on the island unit.*

The kitchen seemed enormous, even before it was extended, and had an L-shaped arrangement of built-in bench seats with curved oak ends where we spent all our time, because that was the only room that was heated. It was this kitchen that inspired more of dad's building projects than any other room; as well as a major extension, he had an island unit installed, the bench seats remodelled more than once, plastic antique beams glued to the walls and ceiling, and (after I had moved out, of course) central heating installed in place of the Rayburn. Throughout all this they retained the same Formica-topped dining table with cutlery drawer, which dad used as a work bench and which was therefore extensively pockmarked, where nails had been driven through the wood he was working on. In the corner of the bench seat was a pile of the

magazines (such as the aforementioned *Titbits* and *Reveille*) that I read during meals, without being told off for being rude, which always surprised me. The kitchen had one arm chair, which was remarkably uncomfortable and which, in any case, was dominated by Mickey, the cat who moved up to Downside with us. He frequently walked back down to the shop to keep his hand in at terrorising passing dogs from inside the front door of The Shop.

Surprisingly, the house only had three bedrooms, all of them doubles and two with built in cupboards. Rosemary and Nanny Lambourne shared the third bedroom, which was furnished with two single beds with candlewick bedspreads, a wardrobe and a dressing table with a sophisticated hinged mirror. I had the other back bedroom to myself with a double bed, I think, from the outset. I also had a free-standing wardrobe, and slowly acquired things like a desk and some shelves and an oil-fired radiator of my own as my status as a swot became ever more firmly established. The house also had a name, 'Windy Ridge', which was itself a status symbol, but justified because there were no house numbers in Downside when we moved in, possibly as a consequence of the road being unadopted, and possibly because there were a couple of houses a bit further along which might also have a claim to be the ones to start the numbering off. So rather than having two 1 Downsides there was none. Finding a name was very difficult until I saw a Windy Ridge while we were driving around rural West Sussex and it was seized upon with both enthusiasm and relief.



*Rosemary's bedroom in its final, most genteel format. Note the candlewick bedspreads and the dressing table with its complicated mirrors, useless design, and modern coat of white paint. Note, too, the radiator and the total lack of coordination of the curtains, which were probably too good to replace*

Nanny Lambourne died in February 1953, and we were certainly living in Downside when that happened because I remember that she was laid out in mum and dad's bed, where she remained in state for at least one night. Bill and Glad moved together into the vacated single bed in Rosemary's room, but why they did not kick me out of mine I cannot now think. I did try to pluck up courage to go in and have a look at Nanny, but my nerve failed, and mercifully I was not required to take my leave of her. Rosemary then took sole possession of the third bedroom, which was thereafter named after her, but they did not replace the

***Glad and Bill 56***

single beds, so that Jo and Adam could sleep there, under the motley collection of inadequate bedding that mum had accumulated, but topped off, as ever, with the candlewick bedspreads. Rosemary worked in Portslade at Flinn's Dry Cleaners, where she was a spotter. This meant she spent her days using a variety of chemicals to remove marks that had not come out in the wash. Eventually, however, she decided that there might be some greener grass elsewhere and emigrated to Australia. I suspect she was also lured by tales that there were not enough women to go around and that she was sure to find someone of her own. It certainly worked, because she married a man called Keith Short and had a child called Tracey. I have a letter that she sent to mum in November 1966, thanking her for the money order, looking forward to Christmas despite the temperatures of over 100 F, and describing their hard financial circumstances.

*Rosemary at her  
wedding in Australia,  
being given away by  
Uncle Arthur*



At some point mum and dad decided to give decorating a go. Their bedroom had matching wardrobes in dark wood, with his significantly smaller than hers, and she had a matching kidney-shaped dressing table in the bay window; all were painted white, and Rosemary's room was decorated in a rather sour yellow. I, on the other hand, was allowed to choose my own wallpaper, and still cringe when I remember what the contrasting walls were like, singly and together. The upstairs toilet got the treatment, and several attempts were made to modernise the bathroom, including the installation of a walk-in shower, but that, like the TV, was probably timed for after I had left home. It seems likely that in the end the toilet and bathroom were knocked into one, but nothing could prevent it being cold, draughty and inhospitable. The stairwell was wallpapered fairly early on, but never a second time, as far as I am aware, because it was such a





*The garden, at its best, when mum had had time and energy to make something of the framework that dad had created (and then remade several times, like the feature in the foreground which is a fishpond that has been filled in). Note Dad's shed, top right.*

***Glad and Bill 58***

huge and inaccessible space.

The garden, on the other hand, was a constant joy and delight to them both. Dad loved big jobs, particularly when they involved the construction of walls, steps and paths, the moving of soil and trees, and the demolition of anything in his path. No garden feature was sacrosanct, however much effort mum had put into getting it to look good. In the early years he was in his element: the site behind the house was full of the most enormous bramble bushes, which concealed the concrete blocks I mentioned earlier, and it was on a slope, providing endless opportunities for the construction of retaining walls, steps, paths, borders and features. With the help of George, Rosemary and the rest of the family we turned it into a garden, and in the first year had a crop of potatoes so good that I was dispatched to deliver them by wheelbarrow to near-by friends.

*Proud gardener,  
outside Windy Ridge  
in July 1984*



Mum, of course, was a faffer (although the word wasn't in our vocabulary at that stage); she loved messing about with plants and flowers of all kinds and could grow anything she set her mind to growing. When she went to visit stately homes

and the gardens of the great and good she wore a baggy raincoat whatever the season, and always came home with its pockets bulging with cuttings she had liberated. For a very long time the only weekday activity which she was allowed (I use the word deliberately) to undertake away from the shop was the flower arranging club she went to on a Monday afternoon down Shoreham, where they had demonstrations and competitions, in which she was often successful. When he retired at around 65, dad had a list of major works that he wanted to complete in the garden and house. A typical example would be moving and remodelling his shed at the bottom of the garden, which incorporated the metal French windows from the lounge when they were finally replaced by sliding double glazed replacements.

Dad worked his way through his list of jobs, and then started at the beginning again, but his fibre-free diet got the better of him. He endured a colostomy, but died fairly soon afterwards after a period during which he became frighteningly gaunt and I, to my shame, stayed away. Mum then had twenty or so years on her own before she had to move to a Nursing Home. She created a good life for herself, gardening, being a grandma, enjoying her friends and being courted by Ray, Dad's Eighth-Army-Veteran friend, who proved a redoubtable opponent at Scrabble and a valued companion.



*Proud grandma at Windy Ridge, probably around Christmas 1991.*



## 8. PARTRIDGE GREEN



*Uncle Jimmy, Aunty Doris and Annette at Windy Ridge. He is wearing his basic uniform of plus fours in heavy tweed. Unusually, he is not wearing a pork pie hat, having, presumably, been bullied into leaving the house to have his photograph taken, without being given enough time to compose himself. Nor is he carrying a 12 bore shotgun, but then he is off duty.*

Perhaps the most significant thing to happen to Glad and Bill was their meeting with **Jimmy Adkins**, Gamekeeper, of Lock Estate, Partridge Green, West Sussex. The estate was owned by the **Harveys**, who I understood to have been big and successful in India. The Listed Buildings site, however, suggests that they owned Claridge's Hotel, and that their daughter Daphne was the first wife of Donald Campbell. The house was offered for sale at £6,000,000 plus in 2011 but in February 2012 it was being rented by Adèle for £15,000 per month because, the local paper suggests, she has a boyfriend in Brighton 'up the road'. The estate agents describe it as

*'A substantial Grade II listed country house providing extensive, superbly appointed accommodation throughout with additional benefits of staff accommodation and a guest cottage. Additionally boasting a leisure*

**Glad and Bill 62**

*complex with an indoor swimming pool. The property is set within beautiful mature gardens and pasture with an outdoor swimming pool, tennis court and pavilion, summer house and helicopter hangar. In total the property sits in approximately 25 acres.'*



Between the Harveys and Adèle the house was in use as the Convent of the Visitation, and now you can see it on Facebook. The Adkins' cottage, on the other hand, was originally two terraced estate workers' houses which they gradually expanded to fill. It still had several staircases when I knew it, as well as a room with a snooker table, although there was not quite enough room to play the game properly. I remember it as a lovely long cottage, with lots of smallish rooms, a cold larder with a constant supply of hard boiled eggs, and a bedroom where I once spent a holiday waking up to sunlight pouring in across the white walls. There were many complicated outbuildings designed for specific functions such as storing grain and hanging game and housing dogs, although these have now been swept away, and instead there are extensive lawns. Now the cottage has evolved into a four bedroom detached house with a guide price of £925,000:

*A charming detached Grade II Listed farmhouse offering immense character set within the heart of the much sought after and most desirable Lock Estate in the village of Partridge Green. The earliest part of the house is believed to date back to the 16th Century with later additions 100 and 200 years ago, and retaining many original period features including fine*

*exposed beams.*



*The Adkins' cottage, long after they had moved out, but before it had become entirely gentrified and worth a million pounds. I took this photo for mum and gave her a framed enlargement one Christmas, and she displayed it on the wall in the lounge. The kennels and other out-houses are on the left, and the billiards room is on the right. Even when I was a kid I knew it was special.*

The Harveys lived the life of country gentlefolk, hosting shooting parties and raising pedigree cattle as a hobby. They were seldom in residence, but Jimmy's job was to make sure there was a plentiful supply of pheasants for them to blast out of the skies whenever the need arose. This involved him in incubating eggs, raising, then freeing chicks, establishing feeding places so that they would hang around, and organising parties of beaters to drive the semi-tame birds in such a way that they flew in a straight line over the hidden guns. Another highlight was going out rabbiting when the corn was being cut. The harvesting was done with a large, semi-automatic tractor-drawn machine which worked around the field from the outside to the middle. The rabbits would retreat into the centre until they decided that it would be better to make a break for it than to be harvested, at which point Jimmy and his mates would make short work of them with their double-bore shot guns, and their remains would be collected by the dogs. I was once given a .22 rifle and allowed to join in, but I was regarded as a bit of a liability because I did not check carefully enough that there were no people as well as rabbits in my line of fire.

Uncle Jim had several working dogs at any one time, mainly Sussex Spaniels, who were kept in kennels at the back of his cottage; to my great disappointment they lived to retrieve rather than be petted, and they were as much tools of his trade as the guns propped up inside the back door to his cottage. He also kept ferrets (away from the house because of the smell, I think), and he used them

**Glad and Bill 64**

for trapping rabbits, carrying them to the target warren in a canvas bag over his shoulder along with his nets. These were stretched over all entrances to the burrow and then ferrets were sent down one opening to panic the rabbits into making a bid for freedom out of the others. Uncle Jimmy took me on wonderful, long, dusty, idyllic walks, during which we would set wire traps for rabbits along the set routes they followed from their burrows to the cornfields. The gamekeeper's skill lay in setting the trap so that the rabbit would run into the wire noose and strangle itself under its own impetus. It was less good if one got caught by the leg. On another occasion Uncle pointed out a heron to me, the first I had ever seen, and then shot it out of the sky because herons took fish that people could otherwise catch for sport.

Uncle Jim had a wife called **Doris**, who worked at the Big House, and three children called **June, Annette and Gerald**. Gerald joined the navy and was trained aboard HMS Arethusa, which I understood to be a shore establishment rather than a boat. Certainly Wikipedia says there were no actual ships with this name between 1950 and 1963, so my memory may well be accurate on this occasion. Apart from that I chiefly remember him for farting and blaming it on me, although he did marry a rather glamorous girl called Jean and raise a family with her. The Adkins girls were far more remarkable than their brother, and despite living in the deepest countryside had quite an active social life. June, the elder, acquired real glamour, class and distinction, and ultimately met a man called Desmond who worked at the rocket research establishment in Woomera, Australia, and went out to live with him there. Desmond's main claim to fame

*Annette, Bill, Uncle Jimmy, Alan, Nanny Lambourne and Aunty Doris on a picnic. Glad is presumably the photographer, and she has helpfully written on the back that it was taken in 'Balcombe Forrest' near Haywards Heath, but not included the date. Interestingly, this is a spelling mistake that I also make consistently.*





was that he got rather squiffy one Christmas and delivered a long and rambling lecture about the banana benders of Australia, whose job it was to ensure that the bananas, which grew straight, were given the correct amount of bend before being sold.

Annette originally went to work as a hairdresser in Kohler's salon in Shoreham where she got to know Tony, whose family ran the ice cream parlour across the road. The Margiottas had a win on the pools which was shared between the various members of the family, and Tony used his to turn an interest into antiques into a business. Eventually he had several shops in the Lanes in Brighton, and a thriving export business with America. Annette and he married, and went to live in an expensive house in Hove which they furnished with stock from the shops, despite the risk of being burgled. Indeed the *Evening Argus* of 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1992 reported that 'jeweller Antonio Margiotta was tied up at gun-point when raiders burst into his luxury home' and his 19 year old son was temporarily blinded when washing up liquid was sprayed in his eyes. The raiders got away with more than £3,500 in cash as well as foreign currency and antiques, but were soon arrested outside the News and Booze shop in Lewes Road, Brighton. In their drive Tony and Annette had a succession of up-market cars, including a Ferrari which he was said to drive to Italy for servicing, although the truth was probably more prosaic: they probably simply timed their holidays back home to coincide with the service intervals. They had a son, Adrian, whom they adored, but both Annette and Tony died unreasonably young.



*Glad, Aunty Doris, Annette, Uncle Jimmy and Bill having a whale of a time.*

The Adkins were Bill and Glad's closest friends. What was originally a business arrangement became a social fixture, and instead of just popping up to pick up some rabbits they came to spend every Sunday in Partridge Green, playing cards, eating, walking the dogs (but not the men) and then going down to The Green

***Glad and Bill 66***

Man in Partridge Green for a few drinks in the evening. I would be left behind to have a supper of cold meat and watch the black and white TV, featuring *Sunday Night at the London Palladium*, and the cool and glamorous advert for Strand cigarettes. I am sure we spent a couple of Christmases at Lock, and there was one I particularly remember because Norm (see subsequent volume) came with me and we had too much to drink, and a second because Alison and I were put up in a neighbour's freezing and soaking wet house, and Annette gave us a gorgeous West Highland White Terrier puppy as a totally unexpected Christmas present. When we accepted a contract to work in the Solomon Islands in 1972 Sam was adopted by my mum and dad, and devoted his life to running from one side of the house to the other to keep pedestrians, cats and other dogs at bay.

*Bill and Alan at back;  
Annette in middle;  
unknown man, Uncle  
Jimmy, Aunty Doris,  
Rosemary and Glad in  
front. Location and date  
equally unknown*



The Lock estate was at the top of a long private road which snaked between various landmarks such as the dairy, where the Adkins and the other estate workers picked up a daily pail of fresh milk, and the pig house, which was yet

*Doris and Glad*



another part of the estate where fascinating but probably unacceptable farming practices took place. At one point the road crossed the same river Adur which flowed into the sea at Shoreham, and it was flooded several times every winter. There were clapper boards alongside the road which enabled people to walk over the floods dry foot most of the time, but if things were really bad mum and dad had to assess whether to drive through, turn back or wade. Even worse was the prospect of getting through but being trapped the other side. It was on this private road that I first learned to operate a car at the age of 16 and at dad's insistence, and it was near the dairy that I was prevented from driving into a brick wall by a well-placed pile of coal.



*Annette and Tony*

For years, the Lambournes and the Adkins were in the habit of spending the day at point to point race meetings at Goodwood, where, several times a year, the estate was thrown open to country people of all kinds. We took generous picnics, and Bill put himself in charge of making pots of tea with the aid of a portable paraffin stove that he called, for some reason, a Benghazi, and which managed to be at one and the same time both dangerous and inefficient. The homeward journey would inevitably involve a call at a pub or two, and I would usually be expected to stay in the car with a packet of crisps and a fizzy drink. The race meetings were reasonably interesting, because there was an element of danger and excitement in being up close to large horses going by at high speed, and the prospect of winning a few shillings from the bookies; much less acceptable were the donkey derbies that they took to attending, which brought out the insufferable snob that was gradually taking over my personality.



## 9. CONCLUSION

That just about brings me to the end of Volume 1, in which I have studiously avoided any topics that might get too close to revealing anything too personal about its author. I strongly suspect, however, that it has revealed far more than I noticed or intended to anyone reading with the slightest degree of attention. I have also left a lot of less revealing material out and – no doubt - raised many questions, and I would be happy to address both issues in volume 2, as well as putting some of my own stuff in deliberately rather than inadvertently. I have enjoyed writing this and I hope you have enjoyed reading it, if, indeed you have done so. Do, please, let me have your questions, comments and feedback.

**With love**

*Alan, Dad, Dandan (and Glad and Bill)*



