

HARRY WALTER EDWARDS
BORN APRIL 15TH 1904
DIED AUGUST 11TH 1980

24-01-77.

This is not a life story, but a few happenings as I remember them of things that did occur during my life. My mum and dad were always loving and kind, but I'm afraid that as young children we did not appreciate all they did, there is my sister Mabel and I had two half brothers, my mum was married before, unfortunately Tom Sparkes was killed during World War 1 only three weeks before armistice was declared, he was a wonderful boy, a baker by trade working for a Mr. Wills in College Street. My other brother Fred joined the Royal Navy at 15 years old serving for over 30 years and retiring as a Warrant Officer, he now lives at Horndean with his second wife.

Our home was at 14 Sussex Rd, where my sister Mabel still lives, it was a comfortable lovely cottage standing on its own, the only one in the street with a slate front to it, which I might add that during hot summer days you could not bare to put your hands on the slate they were so hot. We had a nice garden at the top of stone steps and attached to the house at the top of step, a room we called the 'bake house' in which all sorts of junk was put. The garden had an apple tree which were sort of crab apple, the only use they could be put to was for wine, which mum always made, we used to look forward to wine time. there were also gooseberry and current bushes and a rough lawn mum used as drying ground for the washing.

Our garden joined up with a Mr. Terry, he was the owner of the local hostelry and dad worked for him a great many years, when Mr. Terry died the house we lived in became dads, dad used to drive the horses and carts as taxis were unheard of, also dad used to drive the horses (a pair) drawing the local fire engine, sometimes the fire would occur 8 to 10 miles away and of course took time to get to the fire, The old fire engine had to have a fire lit in its fire box to heat the water in the tank to drive the pump, so you can guess it was real excitement for us lads to see everything got ready.

There were those lovely rides in a 'wagonette' or a 'brake' on Sat afternoons during the summer when dad would drive the cricketers to their away matches in different villages, I was allowed to sit up alongside dad for the glorious drive through lovely peaceful country, the 2 horses that were pulling us I remember well 'Darky and Ginger', everything about the country in those days was so green with miles of hedgerows and wildlife, the air was scented with all wildflowers and life went just quietly along, the bird song of those days always in my memories, no insecticides, no weed killing poisons and yet crops yielded well and all things seemed to fall into its own allotted place.

Now to go back to my days at school, I remember going off to school when I was about 4½ years old, I apparently went on my own and of course when mother found where I was there was a lot of fuss because of my age, anyhow Miss Davies the school mistress told mum to let me go if I wanted to as at 5 years I would have to go, but after a time I wasn't so keen and mum had some friends just near the school who had a big duck, a drake, with which I was very fond of, so the idea was to take me to see 'Beckets' duck and then quietly edge into school, I must have tumbled to their cunning, because mum said that one day I told her I didn't want to see 'Beckets' duck, that meant I didn't want anymore school, but I did say that when I had eaten my Easter egg I would go to school and as Easter was April that year and I became 5 years old, school was a certainty, Mum expected me to play up, but I went to school and was always ready to go, no trouble at all. As time went along I got used to being

As I got older I was allowed out winter evenings and 2 or three of us would meet by the old gas works in Hylton Rd, there was an earth path by the road side where we would mark out a ring and play marbles, with the old gas lamp shinning above us it gave us all the light we needed and the (lamplighter) a man with a long pole with a hook on it would put all the lights out around the town about 10:30 at night, he used to ride around on a bicycle (Steve Hudson) was his name. You must just imagine how we all managed for lights in the home, we had a paraffin lamp in the kitchen come living room, and when we went into the front room as a treat on a Sunday or Christmas time mum had a double burner oil lamp which had a green oil container with a lovely spotted glass bowl shade which we thought was wonderful, the lights for to go to bed a candle in a candlestick, no gas no electric and yet we seemed happy enough and could see to read even by candle light.

Mum roasted on an open fire with an oven one side of the grate and on the other side had a little boiler with a tap to draw off about ½ gal water, but you had to refill the boiler with cold water every time any was drawn off, I can see now on a Saturday tea time mum putting the kippers or fresh herring in the wire dutch oven, you opened up this wire contraption then lay your kippers or herring on and then put the other half of the cage on with 2 clips, that kept them together then hooked it into the fire bars, as the fish cooked the juices ran into a little tray attached to the oven, then when one side was cooked you would turn the whole thing around, those fish were cooked beautifully, I can taste them now.

7-02-77.

I did not mention that my dear old Gran Harriet Edwards my dads mum lived with us, I did not know my mum's parents Granddad and Gran "Hori Blanchard" they as mum told us kept the old Inn in Dragon Street, it was the "Fighting Cocks" long since pulled down and replaced by 'Tauntons Garage'. Mum used to tell us stories of the smuggling that use to go on from Chichester and adjacent coast line, perhaps in the early hours of the morning mum would hear someone whistling a short tune and then grand-dad Blanchard would clatter down the stairs (no stair carpets, just plain scrubbed wood in those days) and meet someone with a horse and trap then little barrels used to be quickly transferred and put in a safe place so that no excise officer could even guess where it was. I suppose everyone went about there every day work as a matter of course, I still have the papers of the transfer of the 'Fighting Cocks' from mums dad to his brother these papers I shall give to June as they are family history.

Just below the 'Fighting Cocks' towards the corner of Dragon Street there were 2 alms houses and the door frame were only about 5 foot high, so you can imagine bending almost double when going into the houses, then there was a bakers and grocery shop belonging to the Miss Lucas, we boys used to go and get 1 penny worth of broken biscuits which consisted of a big fat bag full. I well remember that all along the wall behind the counter was dozens of little drawers with names like cloves, nutmeg, spice in fact nearly everything was marked, they used to sell prunes but they cut them out of a huge chunk of about ½ cwt and the sugar was all in sacks also split peas ordinary peas, even flour was measured out from a sack. The bread they baked was lovely, those top and bottom crusty loaves all hot straight from the ovens which were heated by 'faggots' of wood and when the brick ovens were hot enough the wood as was cleaned out and the bread popped in, the retained heat was sufficient to bake the bread., I also used to buy my rabbit bran and oats there, we were allowed to get it ourselves from the store and you can bet that we crammed as much as we could possibly get into a bag, it cost us 3d.

The days were full of fun and each day brought something different for us to do, fishing in the pond or finding golf balls, that was a great bit of fun because we would walk around behind the players and as soon as they lost a ball we would offer our help in finding it and if we did find it nothing was said, we would accidentally put our foot on it pressing it into the soft ground, but we had our sort of mark to know where it was, well the owner would give up saying if you boys can find it and bring it along to us I'll give you 6 pence, I'm afraid we couldn't resist this offer so of course lots of balls went temporary missing and we gained a sixpence or two (rather naughty I suppose).

As I remarked before time to us did not count, if we were down at the heath and the old 'Puffing Billy' train went along to Rogate and Midhurst or came from Midhurst we knew it was about 4:30 afternoon, the railway has since been pulled up which is a shame as it wandered along through lovely Sussex countryside, then again if we were fishing on the Harting Rd side of the pond we would hear the distant clip clop of horses hooves and that would be 'Frank Bates' bringing the milk churns to Petersfield railway station siding for its journey to London. We would get our shoes on and wait for Frank to come along and then he would give us a lift up to the station, where we would help him with the churns especially loading the empty ones, we would have our ride back to Sussex Rd right by our house. I have said that Gran Edwards lived with us and of course I used to play her up, not being unkind but just awkward. She had a dog lead hanging by the cupboard and if I was mis-behaving it was shown to me and sometimes a little flip with it just to remind me, well I suppose things didn't go right one day and I decided to cut the throng part off, oh dear! that meant trouble, gran would call me a little 'varmint' whatever that was?. I must tell you of the day Giggy and I decided to jump from a meadow over a small wall onto a gravel heap by the road side, I didn't know that cattle had been walking on the gravel heap and left a huge cow pat, well I jumped and "splosh" sat right on it and of course with short trousers it was forced up my legs, I was in one heck of a mess and walked home like a bow legged cowboy, gran said you stink to 'essaloo' I never knew what that word meant or how it first was used, but I did hear it used in my young days quite a lot, maybe its Hampshire dialect, anyhow I got over that mess and was warned not to do it again.

Ill go back to saying about 'Castle House' it was were the Post Office now stands, it was a beautiful Elizabethan house with battlement walls such as the top of Petersfield Church it also had lovely mullion windows and a crest over the front door, there were heavy iron railings along the front and a big iron gate, The walled garden reached from the square the whole length of Swan St., there was a slopping sort of roof opposite what was Baileys shop and I and Giggy used to climb up and then slide down on our bottoms to the road, we were quite happily doing this one day when into the arms of 'Tom Daves' the local policeman we went. He knew me and my dad so I was threatened with dad being told, but I was given a smack with the rolled up cape that the police used to carry. that was sufficient for me we didn't climb up there again, when they pulled the old Castle house down we used to get down in the underground passages, it was said that one went to the church and one to 'the Spain' but we were too frightened to attempt that journey, we used to put a candle in a jar and get so far along the passages when someone would upset the candle it then would be a mad rush to get out.

15-02-77

Of course there was the Cinema to go to which we went to on Saturday mornings for the price of 3 pence, it was all silent films 'Dan Dare, Fatty Arbuckle, buster Keeton', were our favourite films, Mrs. Le Goubin used to play the piano down in the pit in front of the screen and if it was horses on the film she would bang two halves of a coconut shell together and if it was rough sea well then the pieces of sandpaper rubbed together would come into the film, The figures on the film not as today, they were sort of jerky and if walking they appeared to be doing about 20 miles per hour and the horses! well I don't know what speed they did, during the interval Mr. Lemon the manager would come around with a spray thing that was like one of those old fashioned fly sprayers, he would pump this scented spray up and down the gangways, whether it was because we ponged or it was regulations, I wouldn't know, but the noise was deafening and sitting on hard tip up seats soon got us restless, we usually had two hours of film we all used to cheer Mrs. Le Goubin for her piano playing although what she played didn't matter two hoots to us, It amused us when the sequences of the film changed and we were getting sea sounds for galloping horses, the poor woman couldn't get changed over quick enough, but we didn't mind it was good fun. Then of course there was the Sunday school, I used to go to school on Sunday morning at 10 a.m. then we all trotted off to church, but I'm afraid several of us became absent at the church door as there were quite a lot of big tomb stones in the church yard (since removed) and were good hiding places, however we still managed to get a ticket for the annual church outing to Hayling Island, it was a wonderful day, we would all meet at the school about 8:30 in the morning sometime in June and then march to Petersfield station, we would pile into a carriage at least about a dozen in each compartment (as in those days all compartments were separate) I suppose including teachers and perhaps some parents there would be a hundred of us. Then when we reached Havant the coaches with us lot would be taken off the Portsmouth train and little 'Puffing Billy' the Hayling engine would be coupled on and off we would go to Hayling Island. On arrival at Hayling station as I remember it we had a walk a mile to the beach, but on getting there of course it was wonderful, we spent the whole day in the sea or building sand castles, at 5 o'clock we were all rounded up and marched to the Victoria hall where tea was already for us, I can't remember what it was we had but it was a good tea, then we had about an hours 'magic lantern' that's a sort of lamp in which they inserted slides with people or scenery on them this was projected onto a white screen, we thought it was marvelous, then it was the journey home by train, all of us singing and happy as sand boys, I don't think any of us needed much persuasion about going to bed after those wonderful days.

Mrs. Graver used to live 3 doors down from us she had two girls Nellie and Ethel also a boy Fred, we all rode bikes, so on occasions Mrs. Graver would ask mum if I would like to go with them to Portsmouth, we would cycle to Horndean, leave our bikes at the pub then get onto the tram that ran from Horndean to Portsmouth, costing about nine pence each return, I even think us young ones was half fare, It was a lovely ride, the track was on the left hand side of the main road, Cowplain was only a few houses also was Waterlooville and Purbrook, we went right through old Cosham there was no road as it is today, we would go around the shops on arriving in Portsmouth or go down to Southsea beach, we used to like to see the boys diving in the mud down by the Dockyard, they ask you to throw pennies and would all dive for them in the slimy mud, they were known 'mudlarks' I think in later years the Police stopped it all, we would have a nice long day sight seeing and then our tram journey back to Horndean where we would collect our bikes and off we would go to Petersfield, and during the whole seven miles ride you may see a farm cart or a brewers dray with horses pulling it or a couple of cyclists, but most of all coming through Butser Hill you would see hundreds of sheep grazing on the downs also no trees only the old yew tree that had been there for

hundreds of years, there were also hundreds of wild rabbits everywhere, we would get home tired out after a lovely happy contented day. those trips often happened during our summer holidays, we also used to hire out a bike Giggy and I from Mr. Rouswell, the shop was a cycle shop in the High St. where the travel agent now stands, it used to cost 6 pence for 3 hours and during that time we would cycle to Rogate or East Meon and go along as though the devil was after us, it was great enjoyment to us.

17-02-77.

We also had the excitement of seeing air balloons coming over Petersfield a huge basket would be suspended from it and a couple of people would wave madly to us, sometimes one would come down in one of the meadows and it was a mad rush as to who would get there first so as to let the blokes know where they were. The great event of the year to us was 'Taro Fair' held on the heath every 6th October for generations, it used to start coming in the day before with huge steam engines and dynamo's for the lighting of the round-a-bouts, but in our young days all the stalls etc. such as boxing booths, beer tents, shooting range were lit with paraffin flares, a sort of container with a long curved pipe with a spread burner a rough sort of light with more smoke than flame, we used to watch it all being put up and in those days it stretched from the main gate of the heath right out to the cricket pavilion, the stalls were numerous they used to make ginger snaps and huge humbugs on one stall run by old Mrs. Connelly, the stall holders at least a great many of them were well known to the local people, I always think of mum and dad taking us in the evening when the fair ground was all lit up and mum would say 'I must go and say hello to Mrs. Connelly or some other stall holder' everyone seemed to have time for one another, you could have a ride on the round - a - bout or switch back for ½d or a donkey ride. On the morning of the fair there was the cattle sale it was fun watching and listening to the gypsies selling there ponies, we boys used to like to get up by the Red Lion tap room by the time the gypsies came out half drunk and watch the fights that used to go on, women and all would join in and after someone had knocked out someone else's teeth they would be all calling one another dear brother or sister, it was an education to listen and watch. People used to come from miles around it was the one day of the year they met, of course the fair still goes on but its all machines now the old glamour has gone for ever and its quarter the size it used to be, due I think to toffee nosed people living nearby who were influential with the council, if some of them had their way it would be done away with, but thank god they can't do that as its a charter to the Showman's Guild which goes back hundreds of years, I say long may it exist.

As I got older I used to do a paper round, I used to work for Mr. Bradley at the corner of Lavant St., my round consisted of Station Rd all the way to Tilmore Gardens, I used to walk as no bikes were provided, I suppose I must have done about 3 miles each morning, my pay was 3 shillings a week and for that I had to help on Saturday morning clean out the store and scrub down the back yard, the maid they had working for them would give me a cup of cocoa and a stale cake which I always was ready for, Then I did a paper round on Sat evening taking out the Hampshire Chronicle and evening papers I used to hate that because I had to go up past the cemetery and up a dark drive, I used to start running I'll bet you couldn't have seen my backside for dust.

05-03-77.

The other route to Portsmouth after getting to 'Halls hill' would be straight across the road from 'Dean Barn' and up the old lane leading to 'Wardown Hill' then swing left handed to the entrance to the valley known as 'The Lady's Mile' down through the valley and there still stands an old house at the head of the next valley which was a resting place and pub for travelers it was called 'Coach and Horses', then I would say the road was through the next valley on to the village of Chalton where now one can see a wonderful old timbered Inn (The Red Lion) and some very ancient houses, also the church is of great age, I would then think the road went on towards Blendworth a small village and picked up the same road to Portsmouth as I have tried to explain previously the one from Halls Hill to Idsworth, Rowlands Castle. There are many roads around Petersfield which if one had time they would reveal a great deal, I wish I had gone into their history but I am afraid my young and working days didn't allow for that precious gift of 'time' we had to work and work damned hard to live, although as a youngster and carefree before starting work at 14 years 'time' meant nothing to us.

I would like to add that in Petersfield there was a man who had a horse and van and used to collect parcels etc.. twice a week from people who wanted things delivered to Portsmouth or villages on the way he was known as Mr.. Noble the Carrier, he would collect and deliver to and from Portsmouth for as little as few pence it was a great service and I believe well patronized, When I was about 10 years old I remember hearing the tragic news of the sinking of the 'Titanic', there was a big picture of her in the newspapers she was a beautiful ship and so many lives were lost. I also remember about that time seeing the famous 'Haley's Comet' that wonderful star with the huge flaming tail, it used to appear over Butser Hill early evening and us youngsters used to say if it tail pointed downwards it would be the end of the world, I cannot remember how long we were able to see that 'Comet' but it apparently was due to be seen again in about 75 years, so I don't suppose I shall have that wonderful scene in my life time, my grandsons and grand-daughter will I'm sure enjoy seeing it also June and Tony.

During my younger days I well remember that the roads in Petersfield were made up of flint stones they were rolled in by a heavy steam roller and then a tar tank drawn by horses would spray tar over the flints and be followed by another horse and cart carrying sand which the men would spread over the tar, after a couple of days the sand that didn't stick to the tar was swept off it was a long process and one had to be careful otherwise you would get your boots covered in tar when walking across the road, also another thing that always remained in my memory was the summer days when a man driving a horse and water tank with a line of spray at the back end would drive up and down the road spraying water to lay the dust, I can smell that lovely smell now of water contacting the hot dusty road it was to us wonderful especially if we could manage to run behind the spray and get a wetting.

01-04-77.

I will now go the the First World War 1914 to 1918, it was a hard time for all, I remember the troops coming to Petersfield and being billeted in private houses with a room or rooms to spare, I was a boy scout and we were assembled on Petersfield square one morning when the Seaforth Highlanders marched into Petersfield, They were to be billeted out and each of us scouts were detailed to march the different groups to their billets, I can hear those big brawny Scots saying 'a little child shall lead them' One lot I had to take to Sussex Rd a house just above ours at 14 to a Mr.. Stubbingtons, the soldiers had a big room which had been cleared

of furniture and they just put their own blankets on the floor for sleeping quarters and they got their food from their own canteens. I think to that one room I took 8 soldiers and I well remember one of them giving me a tin of plum jam, which I thought was marvelous, We did a lot of jobs being boy scouts such as taking our trek cart out with a gramophone (with big horn) to Heath lodge in Sussex Rd which had been turned into a military hospital and there we would play records to the soldiers who were recovering from their wounds etc., we enjoyed being with them and they made a great fuss of us. Dad of course was in the Army but he was lucky as being a fireman in the local fire brigade he was sent to the military fire station at Bordon camp, Giggy and I used to cycle up to Bordon on a Sunday which was 10 miles ride, then dad would take us to the cook house and give us a slap up dinner, which being hungry boys we soon stowed that away, After dinner dad would show us around the fire station and explain about the different appliances, we would then collect dad's parcel of washing which mum always liked to do and then our cycle ride back home to Petersfield, we used to think nothing of the 20 mile ride, those journeys to Bordon lasted a couple of years until dad was drafted to Portland on guard duty at the torpedo works.

One thing I liked was for being given leave from school to plant the garden with vegetables, mum wrote a note to the Headmaster saying dad was in the army and that she would like me to have leave so as to be able to cultivate the garden. I was given a week and did quite a lot in that time, although it wasn't done to perfection, Gran used to try to tell me what to do and I well remember saying I would do it my way if left alone, I suppose I was being unkind, but at the time I thought I was the cat's whiskers sort of thing, The war went on and many things happened, there was no street lighting at all as the country was alerted for zeppelin raids at night, one did come over Petersfield but few people saw it, I used to go to the 'Band of Hope' classes we made sand bags for the troops and the girls knitted 'Balaclava's' (woolly hats) for the soldiers, round about new years time the Seaforth Highlanders used to have a great time before being sent overseas, I remember one new years day seeing a Scots 'Glengarri' (hat) stuck on 'William of Oranges' head (that's the statue in Petersfield square) and empty whiskey bottle slung around his neck and a turnip stuck on the scroll he had in his hand. The Scots boys had a whale of a time, but I'm sorry to say that they went to France and only a few came home, all their Officers were killed during the big battle at Mons.

Giggy and I used to gather acorns during the autumn which we sold to Walter Page who looked after Mr. Baker's (the butchers) pigs at the Grange farm (actually right here where the grange estate is now) we used to get 1 shilling and 4 pence for a bushel of acorns and believe me it took a lot of bending and time to collect 1 bushel, anyhow 1/4d was a lot of money to us and it was also helping the war effort, On a Sunday if fine Giggy and I would be off for a long tramp over the hills, we would take some bread and a bottle of water, then if we were lucky enough to find a pheasant's nest we would have a small tin with us then light a small fire and boil the eggs they were delicious, we used to walk miles and enjoy every moment although we would be home before dark really tired out, these trips happened a lot during summer holidays especially our trips to Wardown chalk pits hunting for fossils.

09-06-77.

Well the war went on and on times were hard especially the food line, but mum was a good cook and managed to feed us all pretty well, brother Fred joined up in the Royal Navy as a boy trainee and was sent to Plymouth for his training which I learned after a time from Fred was very strict, He was sent to a ship H.M.S. Carnarvon and took place in the Falkland Island

battle against a German squadron of Battleships, the Carnarvon was badly holed but they got home to Liverpool, Fred was given leave and when we saw him he had changed from a round faced boy to a man looking determined and hard, that was what war produced on all the young lads. Tom Sparkes my other half brother went in the Army Service Corps as a tradesman baker, he was sent to France and was there as a baker for 2 years, he came on leave twice and he told us that when he was off duty several of them who could play instruments used to play at different military hospitals and on one occasion he was detailed to leave his work at the army bakery and go to the hospital to play with the band, on his return to the army depot to his horror the whole bakery was blown up, apparently by big German guns, he escaped that but as I've said previously poor Tom was killed 3 weeks before armistice, He was a non combatant soldier but during the big Battle of the Marne he was transferred to the Kings Royal Rifles, poor old Tom had never held a gun in his hands let alone fire one, The news of his death nearly finished mum, she poor dear was in a dreadful state, but time healed. During the war years I joined the Boys Brigade to play in a band we had drums and flutes which we were taught to play by 'Dickey Weeks' the band master, he had one hell of a job training us boys but did knock us into shape we used to march with the territorial's on Sunday parades, on one occasion we marched from Petersfield to Harting and in the afternoon we played different pieces of music in Harting and South Harting, I well remember one Sunday we were playing when a terrific thunder storm came on and we got soaked through, but dried out on our march back to Petersfield.

As time went on I left my paper round job and was taken on by the local squire and Master of Foxhounds as 'milk boy' I used to go up to the farm 'Fairfield Farm' (which is now Broadway caravan park) collect the milk from the dairy also eggs and butter on certain days and take it to Mr.. Hardy's house in the 'Spain' by 7:30 in the mornings and then on Saturdays I would help in the kennels which was at the back of the 'Jolly Sailor' in the Causeway. Mr.. Hardy had a pack of mixed dogs, collies, small dogs and many others, On Saturday I would help Mrs. Smith who was kennel woman to scrub out and renew all the clean straw to the dogs beds, each dog had its own little room and bed and everything kept very clean, I would sometimes wash all there collars and leads in soft soap and polish the brass buckles, sometimes I would be allowed to exercise the dogs in the big field opposite the kennels, also I would light up the big copper ready to boil the horse flesh that came for the dogs it was beautiful fresh meat and smelt lovely when being cooked, I was often tempted to try a piece, especially as food rationing was in force and coupons were required for most things, I gave up my sugar ration to my boss for which I received half a pound of fresh farm butter which I took home for mum.

The war went on and everyone seemed to loose someone dear to them, just before the end of the war my boss Mr.. Sam Hardy M.F.H. asked mum and dad if they would let me join his household staff and be trained as a footman, they and I agreed and into domestic service I went. The butler was Mr.. Chambers and of course I not being used to being shut in felt very miserable at first, I was taken by Mr.. Chambers to the local tailor and was fitted out with a blue suit, (long trousers my first) white shirts, black ties, black patent shoes, black socks, I thought I was the cats whiskers, I well remember going down to Sussex road to see mum and feeling grand in my new rigout but feeling very homesick inside, anyhow I was taught to wait at table, clean silver etc., sweep out rooms, polish furniture and all that goes with domestic life. Mr.. Hardy was considered as a man with plenty of money although my pay was 5 shillings a week and of course my food and clothes which was considered so I suppose it wasn't too bad, being Master of Foxhounds my boss had many scarlet coats and riding

boots with special tops which were cleaned with a powder just dampened but this I was not allowed to do, Mr. Chambers did the tops I did the boots with Day and Martins polish, it was like black lead (no patent polish) and damned hard to get a polish. I have known a pair of boots being taken to the boss and he would swear and carry on if there was a spot wrong, I was terrified of him and when I had to answer his bell sometimes when Mr. Chambers was out he would swear and say where the hell have you been, although it was only the case of seconds getting there. It was hard going and me, being a country boy felt caged up as I only got a few hours off each week never a week end and only after being there about 4 years did I get a holiday.

I must say that the end of 1914 -1918 war came to an end much to the rejoicing of everyone and one thing that amused me was the gas lamp in the alley (that's the path that leads from St. Peters Rd to Hylton Rd) it wasn't lit of an evening when all the other lights were back on the streets so some brainy bloke climbed up the lamp post and put the following notice "The lord said 'let there be light' so for Christ sake lets have some", and that did the trick we got light.

21-07-77

I should have of course said that I left school at the age of 14. I left on the same day as my birthday April 15th The Headmaster was a Mr. Gates and he wrote out a reference for me which I still have, my work went on and eventually they thought I was good enough to become a 'footman' of course that meant a trip to the bosses tailors at Harrow - on - the - Hill London my boss being an old 'Harrowian' it had to be done properly, my uniform consisted of black doe skin trousers, a red waistcoat and dark green coat with 32 brass buttons each with the family crest on them a sort of dragons head, also a white shirt, stiff white collar and white bow tie, I was told I looked very smart and naturally was well pleased with myself, during mornings I wore a double breasted blue suit, white shirt and black tie, I changed into uniform about 6 p.m. so as to be in readiness for laying up the dinning room table and also taking the silver dishes etc. round to the kitchen, that was of course after I had open the menu which Mr. Chambers wrote out and placed in a silver mounted horses hoof (one of the bosses favourite hunters feet who had died) then the ritual of serving dinner a 5 course dinner, oysters, (when in season) soup, fish meat (a joint of beef) a sweet then a savoury followed by dessert coffee and liquor, different wines with fish or meat was served. Breakfast was just bacon and eggs or sausage or kidneys, coffee or tea, the coffee was made in the dinning room through a special glass contraption. Lunch was perhaps chops with a choice of cold ham or some kind of game bird, the ham was always a huge one which stood on a silver spiked frame and you carved off thin slices, of course I was never allowed to carve that was the butlers job, even at staff meals the butler did the carving, I will say that all through my career I found the food for the staff very good, a lot depended on who the cook was, some spoilt food and others did a wonderful job.

I well remember one old fat cook we had, of course we had a wine cellar and Mr. Chambers said to me one day 'I want you to go down and get a bottle of 1888 vintage claret and to decanter it' well to my surprise about a dozen of the bottles were empty, it appeared that the old cook had been having a hell of a good time and the kitchen staff couldn't understand why she seemed so merry, anyhow it was the sack at a minutes notice, I felt sorry for the old dear as she always looked after us well.

Being Master of the Foxhounds my boss had to entertain quite a lot and if a farmer had any of his chickens or ducks killed by foxes they would bring them to the boss and he would pay for their loss, most of the birds only had a head chopped off so they were eatable and were given away, I often had one to take down to mum and as you can imagine a chicken in those days was really something to have, during the summer months my boss had a farm house at East Meon, Lower farm, the whole household moved over about April until late September when we all returned to Petersfield at the Spain, The village pub with its stables had to accommodate the grooms and horses these were a coachman, 4 grooms and 2 stable lads, my boss used to drive a 4 in hand coach yellow and black with 4 beautiful black horses pulling it the coachman and 2 grooms in their green livery also a horn blower in scarlet coat a gray top hat, every now and then he would burst forth with a fanfare you could hear them coming for miles along the country roads it was a really wonderful sight. There was also the puppy shows held at the kennels at Droxford and a lunch laid on for the farmers, whose ground was hunted on during the winter, It was a grand affair held in a huge marquee seating about 100 people, the catering people did the food but Mr. Chambers and I served champagne cup which we made up and believe me it was good, I well remember seeing some of the farmers after lunch they didn't know whether it was Christmas or Easter, On one occasion Mr. Chambers and I got into a bit of trouble because we gave some of the waitresses and waiters some champagne cup and they were 'blotto' and couldn't do their work, anyhow we got over it.

24-09-77

I must go back a bit and say that at the age of 10 yrs I did a job morning and evenings for the Miss Lucas who lived at the top of Borough Hill, I used to get there at 7:30 a.m. I had shoes to clean, knives and steel forks which I had to clean with brick dust on a board which I wet with water and then hard rubbing with a piece of cloth, it was hard work then I had to pump up water from the well which went up to a tank in the roof and I had to keep pumping until the water came out of the overflow pipe, also coal scuttles to fill and then off to school, after school I would go up there and the old girls would get me weeding or rolling the lawn with a great big roller I could hardly move, or I would have the pony stable to clean out or collect all the ducks eggs from the meadow at the back of the garden where the ducks lived, This job including Saturdays which was a day of hard work for someone of my age, but I stuck for a long time until the old girls wanted me to work all day during school summer holidays and at that I just said to mum I wouldn't do it and both mum and dad heartily agreed and said I was a brick to stick it so long and all this for 2/6d a week, thank god those days of exploitation are over for the young ones of today.

Going back to my days or years as a footman I really enjoyed all the pomp etc.. and I learnt a great deal about 'gentry' and a hell of a lot about so called 'gentry' some of the really old families were good to their staff, but they thought they owned you and they were little gods and always correct in whatever they did or said.

12-12-77

As I have said my boss had a house at Lower Farm East Meon which we moved too in the summer until hunting began on Nov. and then back to the 'Spain' house, It was a lovely old farm house no electric only oil lamps in all the rooms I had about 30 lamps to clean and fill each morning which took quite a time especially those lamps in the drawing room which

were standard lamps on silver bases, the only lights in the dining room were candles in brackets on the walls and candelabra's on the table which held 12 candles, I must admit they gave a lovely glow and the effect on the silver was wonderful. My boss was fond of music and had a pianola in the drawing room and nearly every evening after dinner I was detailed to sit in front of it and put the rolls of music into the pianola then sit on the stool and peddle away thus playing the pianola, I had a sort of little handle to guide the pointer along the music roll as it unwound so as to be soft or loud, sometimes I sat there playing the thing for a couple of hours until the boss was ready to go to bed, he would then say 'that's enough' no thank you or any remark other than get my bedtime candle stick which was a beautiful brass affair and off to bed he would go without saying good-night, he was very wealthy but wages were poor although he gave to people who sort of got around him with stories of hardship.

None of the indoor staff were allowed to be seen by him out on the lawns or even on the landings after 10:00 a.m. It was a considered fact that all cleaning and work through the front of the house should all be finished by 9:30 a.m. and if it wasn't then the butler would want to know why?. My half day out was from after washing up the silver after lunch and polishing it with a chamois leather, it would be about 2:30 p.m. and I would cycle home to Petersfield 5 miles to see mum and dad, it was always a rush as I had to be back at Lower farm by 6 o' clock on time change into livery and get ready the dining room table for dinner, part of my job was to take the silver dishes from the butlers pantry to the kitchen where they were put on a rack over the huge steel stove to warm up, the grate that the cook did the cooking on was a huge affair heated by coal with 2 ovens either side of the fire place, the kitchen maids job was to keep the stove polished with black lead and to burnish the steel surround it was nice to see the polished steel but hard work to keep it clean.

All the tables and chairs and kitchen dresser were scrubbed no formica in those days and also the floor was tiled, and scrubbed each day they were hard working days but we managed to see the funny side of things and had our laughs, the grooms and coachman were in lodgings in the village of East Meon and of course all the horses were stabled at the back of the pubs, it did the landlords of the pubs a lot of business and they were sorry when we moved back to Petersfield for the winter, after a few years of our moving to and from Petersfield we got to know people in the village and were invited to their village hall dances, I didn't get on much with dancing at first but then the village girls taught me the waltz and fox trot and I got along well.

As time went along all sorts of things took place such as my boss entertaining during Goodwood Race week there was a large store by the farm entrance it was about 70 ft by 20 ft and everything was cleared out and the place thoroughly cleaned, then it was got ready for a ball or dance as you may say, The florists would be called in and the place transformed with all kinds of palms and pot plants, then after dinner the guests would arrive walking through a covered in walk from the house to the store, of course there was an orchestra for the dancers. We the staff would serve all sorts of food after midnight and the butler and I had to open bottles of champagne in the butlers pantry, we had to have the window open as the corks went off like a gun shot, the following morning the gardener had to have his wheel barrow to collect all the corks from the lawn, my boss must have spent hundreds on parties and his coach and horses which he was forever driving around the village and Petersfield.

I well remember the dairy which was on the north side of the house and always cool in summer time it was partly underground with slabs of stone flooring and the wide shelves

were of thick 2 inch slate, the milk was brought in by 'Charlie Prior' the cowman (all Jersey cows) he poured it into these huge pans which were about 2ft 6in across and 6 inches deep, the next morning the cook would go to the dairy with a huge ladle the size of a soup plate and proceed to skim off the cream for butter making, after collecting cream for a few days the cream was put into the butter tub and the top fasten down, then one turned a handle round and round until the cream turned into butter, it was lovely butter I have never tasted anything like it since those long days ago, the cook had wooden butter pats and made the butter up into half pounds. I gave up my sugar ration in World War One to my boss for which I received half a pound of farm butter which I used to take home to mum on my half days out as food was all rationed and that bit of butter was a great treat.

We used to say amongst ourselves that the boss was dotty because you would hear him singing whilst dressing in the morning and then suddenly he would start swearing and shouting that nothing would 'bloody' fit him and he was a poor unfortunate so and so, then out would go the offending garments through the window on to the lawn, hair brushes, shaving kit, shoes and many other things, I, when things had calmed down would be told by the butler to go out to the lawn and collect everything up, we never had many dull moments I can assure you.

The years seemed to pass so quickly then and many things happened and changed, the war ended and men came home but work was scarce and many were in great need the government said 'a land fit for heroes' but it was not so, those who gained were the wartime profiteers, the poor man went to the wall, the wages in those days amounted to very little, of course cost of living was also low, but a farm hand got about 13 shillings a week which in a lot of cases he paid 2/6d for his cottage, of course growing his own vegetables and perhaps having a few chickens and a pig for Christmas killing was a great help, I continued my training as footman and many funny things happened, for instance when my boss started courting a Miss Macarthur who resided with her sister (both Australians) at friends house at Garden Hill Steep, I had many trips of different kinds, if Miss Macarthur was staying in London, it was nothing for me to be called by the boss to take a letter to London and wait for an answer. The boss would tell the coachman to get a horse and trap ready to pick me up at Lower Farm and drive me 5 miles to Petersfield railway station where I would catch the train to Waterloo then get a taxi to take me to Kensington to the hotel, I would then see the head porter and get the letter taken to Miss Macarthur's room and saying I was to await an answer. Miss Macarthur would then write a reply and give it to me, the hotel porter would order me a taxi and then back to Waterloo station where I would find out the time of the next train to Petersfield then telephone the butler at East Meon letting him know of the arrival time at Petersfield, he would then tell the coachman, and the horse and trap would be waiting for me at Petersfield station we would then drive 5 miles to Lower Farm where I would go to the boss's study to deliver the letter. sometimes I concluded that the answer didn't suit the boss and off I would go again to London the same thing over again. I didn't mind at all it was time off and all paid for, but this journey happened many times before my boss got married and that was some day you can imagine,

They were married at Steep church and it was full up with guests, the boss had a 'Victoria' and two horses, coachman and groom, I have a photo of myself placing a rug over the bride and bridegroom knees before they were driven away to the reception at Mr. Bovils Garden Hill Steep, the champagne flowed like water it was a splendid affair, after the reception the chauffeur came with the Silver Ghost Rolls Royce and took the happy couple to London for

honeymoon, but the next day they came home the boss used to suffer with very bad headaches so that was that.

As I have said the boss was Master of Foxhounds to the Hambleton hunt and when hunting he was never happier at getting wet through and coming home and having his top boots pulled off half full of water, that meant a good days hunting, he would then have his bath already prepared by myself or the butler, making sure it was the right temperature, then if he didn't feel like dressing for dinner he would order a basin of bread and milk and have it in the drawing room with me playing the pianola, when you read about this it sounds fantastic but we took it all in our stride, I cannot recall all the things that did happen, the boss had about 10 different dogs and employed an old chap named Walter Bone to look after them, there were special kennels built, the dogs each had its own little room with a raised wooden bed and a nice railed in run, Walter used to take them out in the meadows for exercise and sometimes the poor old chap would get tangled up in some of their leads of course if we happened to see this happening we would call out and have a good laugh which didn't go down well with Walter, he had a shepherds van in which he slept it was lovely and comfortable also a building with a little kitchen range to do his cooking. My boss was a great cigar smoker so all the butt ends I used to save for Walter who would cut them up to smoke in his pipe, he loved them, in those days the cigars the boss smoked were sent down from London in lovely cedar wood boxes each cigar costing about 5 shillings so they were really good ones and old Walter enjoyed the bit and pieces.

I must add that the entire household and grooms coachman and horses some winters went to the Isle of Wight, the boss used to take a house furnished for six weeks so that he could hunt with the Isle of Wight hounds, one year we were at a house called 'High Salterns' in Sea View and another time at Wooton, that was a lovely house and we the staff enjoyed it no end, In our spare time which was not a lot we would go to different places of interest and some evenings after dinner was over and we were all cleared up we were allowed to go to the local dances which we made the most of and got to know quite a lot of people, I have some photos of the staff taken at 'Wooton House'.

Also another of the bosses hobbies was forming a concert party and going around to different villages such as Harting, Rogate, Compton and many others, the boss was a great admirer of the late Sir Harry Lauder and used to entertain Sir Harry and had his permission to sing his songs, of course that wasn't good enough for the boss he had to have lovely kilts and jackets with plaid shawls, beautiful stocking and shoes with huge silvery buckles also the jeweled dagger carried in the top of the stocking, in other words he had complete outfits of different clans, he looked very nice but the clothes must have cost a fortune and anyhow he couldn't sing, but being his concert party there were other artists who made up for him, anyhow the butler and I used to follow the party around with refreshments, we had a big ~~urn~~, primus stoves and masses of food which we prepared before setting out, it was a real palaver, sometimes twice a week this would happen, all of it must have cost the boss a fortune, these concerts were all for charity so it did a bit of good.

Time went on and I was left at times in charge, one time the butler was in hospital for 3 weeks and of course the jobs fell to me, but I managed quite well in spite of the boss letting rip at me sometimes for some trivial thing, but after five minutes he was back to normal and treated one as though nothing had been said, many times I was so fed up that I felt like running away but as jobs were so scarce I thought better of it.

HARRY WALTER EDWARDS
DIED AUG 11 1980
CREMATED -

ASHES SCATTERED
NEAR THE BLUEBELL WOODS
HE PLAYED IN AS A BOY.

and 'sally larnes' which was a real Cheshire cake, so when I went on to see the next person the same thing happened so I just packed up calling on to many.

1979.

HARRY

Dad was never able to finish all he wanted to write as he became more ill and Died on August 11 1980.

But so far as he wrote was up until about 1930, when he left Manchester and came to work for Col. Bonham Carter as butler he worked there for about 28 years, there was so much he wanted to write about, the 3 Bonham Carter girls where only children when he went there but he saw them grow up, and went to Buckingham Palace with each of them when they where presented at Court, and attended each of their weddings, Dad and I met in 1932 and got married on April 8th 1933, a few years after that the Second World War started he joined the Special Police and was on duty several nights a week, there was so many exciting and interesting things he could have written about, Dad left the manor when the Col. died he didn't want to back as a butler again so went to Durford Place to do the garden their as he loved gardening, he left Durford Place when he was 65 and we returned to Grange Road where we lived for 9 years but when dad was about 70 he started to become ill arthritis in his spine and bad legs, he suffered a lot although I tried to make life easier for him by doing all I could, but it was a losing battle and when he was 76 he died, we were married 47 years and 4 months, one of our happiest days was when June was born, dad had a good life really although he worked hard he traveled a lot with the Col. and had great times fishing with the gents and also his pals, he made me laugh many times telling me about the funny things that happened when he went fishing, we had our ups and downs but we had a good life together, maybe it wasn't a bed of roses as we were often hard up, but we were able to see our grand children grow up together we were so proud of them all, Its only now a year after Dad died that I have been able to bring myself to read this, the ache and the longing for him is still there, and now in my seventieth year I know I must go on living without him, so I must try and make a new life for myself for my remaining years. but I felt I must just finish this off explaining why Dad couldn't do so. God Bless Him, he is at peace now and out of his pain.

August 1981.

Oct. 1981.

Pansy May Edwards (nee Greed) Born 13th Nov. 1911.

~~I was born in the little valley of Nantymoel in South Wales the second daughter and forth child of Alice Maude Greed (nee Blick) and Wilfred Thomas Greed, I had four brothers and three sisters, when I was a few months old my parents moved about a mile down the valley to the Whyndom, all of my childhood was spent in that house in Hendri Avenue, what happy memories I have of it, the First World War started when I was about 3 years old but I can remember the soldiers in their uniforms coming home on leave, at the end of our road there was a road that went up to the hills which was called 'fairy Glenn', but quite near our home there was a farm where all our holidays where spent, the farmer loved children and never turned us away, when we came home from school we used to fetch our jugs from our mothers and troop down to the farm and leave them there and then the farmer would take us up on the hill to help him fetch the cows down sometimes there was five or six of us and he~~