

Oral History Interview with Leal (and Lorna) Wyatt and Janet Fairbanks.

Conducted by Denys Ryder, September 2013



Riverside in the 1990s

Denys Ryder, I am sitting here in an ancient, historical, hall house, in the middle of East Meon, by the River Meon. It's called Riverside, and is the home of Leal and Lorna Wyatt, who have been here for many many years. Leal, when did you come to East Meon?

Leal Wyatt.

When I was seven. We moved an awful long way to get here, a total of three miles, from West Meon, where my father was a butcher, in West Meon, at the time.



Morley Horder (*left*) owned not only The Court House but, I believe I am correct in saying he possibly owned every thatched property at that time in East Meon. The previous butcher who was here had either retired or left. I'm not sure which, but Morley Horder, wanted a butcher's in East Meon and he went and saw my father and, I don't know whether he pleaded with him, but he more or less talked into him coming to East Meon.

Denys. Your father's shop was on the road between East Meon and West Meon, going into West Meon on the right, just before the viaduct, is that right?

Leal. That's right, yes.

Denys. Because I happened to come to the village at about the same time as you did, 1939, and I had connections with West Meon as well as East Meon. Anyhow, having arrived here (**2mins 02 secs**) in this house, which is a thatched house, attached to it is a separate building. What is that, Leal?

Leal. That was then a slaughterhouse and two stable blocks, and just behind the stable blocks was a very small piggery. The design of those buildings was actually ideal for what they were; whoever put them there, or used them before my father came here, did that right. To me, at any rate, no-one could have designed them better.



Outbuildings



The butcher's shop at Riverside

Where the small gate is, just east of where the letterbox is, was a gate there, where the animals were driven in, in a small barn this end of it, when they were ready to be slaughtered; there was another door this side of that, there was a small yard there, directly into the shop. And at the back, where there is now more garden than anything else, there was a small paddock where, if they were bought

'on the hoof' ... Because one of the differences, I believe now, present day butchery to the butchery in those days, in my father's day they were butchers, complete from seeing it on the hoof, turned out in a field or whatever, depending on the animal, and he had a reputation for being a very good judge of what the meat would turn out like, when it was on the table. They are more cutters than they are butchers. I own up to being a bit prejudiced on that score.

Denys. 5'03" . How long did your father have his shop here?

Leal. My mother and father had me quite late in life. We were here from, say I was seven, that was 1938, just prior to the Second World War, and he was alive until early in the year we got married, which was 1957.

Denys I can remember buying meat from him from the window, the thing that came down on two chains, I remember buying meat from him.

Leal. In West Meon we lived, until I started school at West Meon, we lived at Horsedown.



Denys. Did you?

Leal. Belonging to Jenny Staunton There were a pair of cottages up there, belonging to Jenny Staunton.

Denys. Jenny Lynch Staunton. Who was the goat lady.

Leal. That's right, yeah. I always forget the Lynch. There were two cottages there, one belonged to her, the other belonged to the Forestry Commission.

Denys. I thought one belonged to Westbury, but that must have been much later. Tom White, had it at Westbury.

Leal. It was after she died, I think, that Westbury took one over, then of course the Tyrwhitt Drakes took it over.

Denys. That's right, turned in to a posh residence now.

Leal. Just prior to that, it was turned into one cottage, because the person who was in the Forestry (cottage), he lived there on his own. My father had some of the land that went with the cottage that we were living in ...

Denys. Right on the top there, yes.

Leal. And he had one Guernsey cow up there, plus whatever horses he was either dealing in or driving at that time.

School, East Meon National School and Rowlands Castle



East Meon National School



Mrs Hastie, left, with the Lamberts

07.28. Denys. Now tell me, you were at school in West Meon, you say all your time, never at school in East Meon, on the side of the hill there?

Leal. When we moved here, I went to school up here, I was about eleven. How that came about was that at Rowlands Castle and Hawkley, they were two locations where a school from Battersea, known as Battersea Central School, there was a branch in Petersfield for girls, but these two were boys. I think they went to Hawkley first, because the headmaster at Battersea was resident at Hawkley, and we had at Rowlands Castle, and it was his deputy who became head there, and I think the reason was, for coming round the villages, was to make the numbers up at Rowlands Castle, because they didn't really have sufficient to warrant the number of staff that came there with them.

08.50. Denys. Now you went to the school on the side of the hill, I can't remember what it was called.

Leal. Windwhistle.

Denys. That's right, Windwhistle. Did you go on from there to a school in Petersfield?

Leal. No, I went to Rowlands Castle.

Denys. You went to Rowlands Castle.

Leal. And the reason we went to Rowlands Castle, and I think this is to me quite relevant, it may not be to anyone else, I, like a number of shall we say better off boys in the village, sat an examination to go to Churcher's College. When I went for mine, I was given a piece of paper with printing on it - I was only about eleven then - there was barely a word on it that I understood. The reason for that was that this school up here, Church of England School, managed by the vicar at the time, and it had three teachers, female teachers, the head was Mrs Hoyes, who I think lived somewhere near Basingstoke, and travelled here each day, another one was Mrs Hastie, who used to lodge with the Lamberts, across the road, one of the farmers, who farmed at Spyglass, and the other one was Miss Miles who not long after married the farmer who had Church Farm, up the road here.

Denys. Where Chris Moor lives. Yes, ok.

Barnsley Workshop



Edward Barnsley

11.05 So, from the school at Rowlands Castle, how did your connection begin with Barnsley Workshops? Barnsley must have played a very important part in your life?

Leal. Barnsley ... I think I understood him as well as any youngster going there as an apprentice, because he was almost the same generation as my father, who practised ... not necessarily young people should be seen but not heard, but also 'yes' meant 'yes' and 'no' meant 'no'. Full stop, yeah.

Denys. Full stop?

Leal. Full stop, basically, yeah. The other thing about my relationship with Barnsley was that the previous apprentice to myself, because every apprentice that went there went on a month's trial, for two reasons, that the apprentice wanted to work there and because Barnsley wanted him to work there, and I did want to, but the third week of my month, on the Monday, the other apprentice before me, name of Roy, he'd been there for two years - at that time, Barnsley reckoned to take on an apprentice every two years.

12.56. Denys. How many did he have in the workshop?

Leal. Apprentices-wise, three, because in my final year, fifth year, I was coming out of apprenticeship when the other apprentice was just starting. The problem with this Roy, he turned up one Monday, my third week of starting, and asked one of the craftsmen there to give him a hand with his toolbox, because one of

the things we did, the apprentices did, because we had the materials provided, was to make their own toolbox when they had advanced that far, and he thought, and this was something that hardly ever happened, certainly on your own, as an apprentice, that he had a job off-site, and when this apprentice person asked where he was going he just, quite casually in a way, said "I've left"; he'd got a job at the Petersfield Timber Company, at that time. And he left, and that did me in a way a little bit of a favour because if I had decided in the next week that I didn't want to stay there, they didn't have anyone as a starting apprentice to sweep the floor and make the tea. But they had these pupils, the younger ones, the older ones, could be from any walk of life. My two 'brothers', younger ones, were generally people with money. One of them there had his own racing car, provided by his father who ..

Denys. But you didn't have a racing car. You had to come back from Barnsley every night, is that right? Every day?

Leal. I cycled.

Denys. You came on your cycle. What age were you then?

15.25. Leal. This again, I have considered since, where I had a slight advantage,. I left Rowlands Castle when that went down to London, and went for eighteen months to senior school. I personally would have liked to have gone to Portsmouth Technical College but there wasn't any vacancy, it was full up, so the next best thing the Hampshire Education system found, for me and one or two others, was to set up quite a special class at Cowplain Secondary School, boys' school that was. So the advantage for me, I was sixteen, just over sixteen when I went to Barnsley, whereas Roy had started at fourteen. And also, Roy was much shorter than I was, and the younger pupils had acquired this habit of, when they wanted help, to hold the end of a clamp, I had observed this in the first three weeks before Roy left, they'd pick up a bit of work to draw his attention, and when he'd look up, he'd say 'Come on boy, we're waiting!' That sort of attitude, you see ... you'd never get this today, in any form of employment, as far as I know ...

Denys. I don't think so ...

Leal. The problem Roy had, you see, that, when they came to treat me like that, the foreman took me down ...

Denys. Who was the foreman, by the way?

Leal. Bert Atkins

Denys. Oh Bert, of course.

Leal. They did have a little stable, at one time, presumably, but it was mainly used as an apple store, and he said, come down to the stable and I'll put you wise, what the situation is here, more or less. His words to me were, when one of the pupils asked you, to do something, or help, my advice is to you, he was very much a father figure as it were, he had two boys of his own anyway, I advise you to help them. I replied, being that bit older, and a bit larger than Roy, I said

'certainly'. In anything to do with work, I said, I'm here to do an apprenticeship, and the biggest part of the apprenticeship is to learn a trade. Anything they asked me to do, associated with work, the job, I will do. Part of his telling me this was, "You've seen how they treat Roy?" My response to that was, being a bit older, Rowlands Castle, Battersea boys, they weren't village boys, and I said "I will help, but if they ever treat me like I've seen them treat Roy, they'll find they're dealing with a very different individual. Rowlands Castle was a rough school, it was classified as a rough school, and when we first went there, there were several from East Meon, and local villages around, to make the numbers up, and when you consider their frustration, what they must have been going through, put on a train or a coach from London, to get away from the bombing &c, during the war, and dumped with complete strangers, whose fathers were mainly away fighting the war, so they were landed with the mother of the family, as it were, I said, "I've been to a rough school, where the customary practice was, you'd be playing around when suddenly, one of them would come along and try his hardest to knock your teeth down your throat, you know, smack you on your nose as it were. To start with we said, "what did you do that for?" "You gave me a dirty look." We soon overcame that by practising some of their treatment. In the end, we got on ok together.

Lorna

21.42. Denys. If we come back to East Meon again, and your time after Barnsley, you must obviously have been in the village all that time, coming home as you told me, on a bicycle, how did you meet Lorna?

Leal. I actually wanted to learn to dance, ballroom dancing. One of the tradesmen, craftsmen, at Barnsley's, and his wife – he'd got married then, by that time – went to A.L.Webb's dancing school, which was once a week, and he persuaded me, together with Jane, to learn to dance. And that's where we actually met.

Denys. This was the 1950's, or 60's?

Leal. No, 1950's. We got married in 1957, and it was three years prior to that.

Denys. And Lorna, you live in East Meon?

Lorna. No, I lived in Petersfield. Your father died, just before we got married, didn't he?

Leal. Because originally there was as many girls, if not more, as there was boys, wasn't there? She also was starting her nurse's training, and then went back to Heathside, where she started her nursing...

Denys. In Petersfield, Heathside, Petersfield ...

Leal. And one of the sister's there was this George's wife. That's how we got to know each other, as it were. I'll never forget, I'll always remember that, when I first saw her, because she was very tall and slim then, what she had was a very short haircut, very short, almost as short as a man's

Lorna. No it wasn't ...

Leal. When I first saw her, I thought, 'why doesn't she let her hair grow a bit?' Because what it had done, the short haircut had given her a very long neck.

Denys. You were living in the house here?

Leal. I was living here.

Lorna. With his parents.

Denys. And you've been here ever since?

Lorna. We lived with Leal's mother, and Doris in those days. You must remember Doris?

Denys. No, to be honest, no.

Lorna. She was quite frail.

Denys. She lived at that end did she?

Lorna. That end, yeah. She was still single then.

Denys. And between the two of you, you had three girls, did you not? And they've all gone in for nursing? Tell me a little bit more about what you did after Barnsley. You obviously fell out from Barnsley, and I can recall you going off to school somewhere, down the Fareham area, was that right?



Westbury House School

26.00 Leal. That would have been at Westbury. That came about by Mrs Manners .

Denys. Jane Manners, yes.

Leal. ... saying to Lorna that they had this workshop there.

Denys. In the basement, was it not?

Leal. What was the stables, at one time.

And somehow it came up, between Mrs Manners and Lorna, and I think she mentioned that they could do with some work, joinery work, and Lorna said, Leal can bring you some wood home, off-cuts, for anyone that wants them, for firewood, and that is how I came to go there two evenings a week.

Barnsley again.

27.25 Denys. Did you not work at a firm down at Southborne?

Leal. I worked at the joinery works there. At a time when Barnsley and I were having quite a serious argument, because I had started to have a family then, and I wanted to have more money, and I asked him if there was a possibility of having a rise. He promised that he would look at it and have a look at the books over the weekend, and tell me on Monday. Well that Monday materialised six weeks later, and when I approached him again – I approached him every week –

and his excuse was that he had no time to look at the books. Then, he made a comment which I did take exception to, why was I always trying to make trouble? My answer to that was, "I'm not making trouble, I'm merely asking about the possibility of having a rise." The answer to that was, "I don't know why, you're only a working man." That was his general attitude, you see. My reply to that was "You probably have the same attitude, in one respect, as I have inasmuch as your wife does your shopping; my wife does my shopping. Now, if you ask me the price of a loaf of bread, I'd have to think very hard, I don't know if I could tell you. But I assume that your wife would have the same argument. That's why I want a rise, if possible. As regards me being a trouble-maker, the others, particularly the younger ones, won't ask you; I will. What you've done in the past, when I haven't asked for a rise, you've given me one, but you've also given the other employees one. This time, give me one but not them. Then you will find out who the trouble-makers are. Where I have the courage to ask you, they are too frightened to." It went from there, really.

Denys. He made you an offer, and he didn't accept it, probably.

Leal. It worked out this way. There was a Portsmouth Evening News, on a Friday. I was looking through it this Friday, and there was two adverts, one was for a chap at Horndean, his own little business, small business, sharpening lawn mowers, selling lawn mowers, and the other one was a firm advertising for joiners, bench joiners, and I took my mower, wanted grinding, I took it down there, because in the advert he said he'd do it while you wait. I went on a Saturday morning to have it sharpened.

Lorna. This has nothing to do with East Meon ...

Leal. It is part of me.

Denys. What made the people in East Meon.

Leal. I eventually found Faulkners in Waterlooville. Some chaps working there, I went in there and, "is this the firm that's advertising for a bench joiner?" They said "Yeah". "Who do I see?" They said "Oh, the manager. He's up in the office." He could see anyone messing about and not working. He had a really nice system there, and just "John! You're not being paid for that!" Sort of thing ... I went up there, saw him and explained to him that I was actually a furniture maker, cabinet maker, trained as a joiner, he said "you'll pick it up, it's all woodwork, when do you want to start?" So I said "(inaudible) relationship with my employer, current employer, reasonable notice," I said that was possibly about a week. He said "Here's my phone number, the firm's phone number, give me a ring two days before you actually want to start, which will give me time to get a bench ready for you to work on, and I'll select someone that can help you and make you aware of their system." That's what happened. When I went to give my notice in at Barnsley he hit the ceiling and said that he would have assumed that after I had been there a total of sixteen years I would have given him at least a month's notice

Denys. Sixteen to thirty two, thirty three, is that right? Something like that?

Leal. Something like that, just turned 30.

Denys And by then you had three children, is that right?

Leal. Yes, we had (Wendy?) after that.

Lorna. I couldn't tell you the years they were born ...

Leal. Anyway, what I replied to Barnsley then was, I would also have expected that after sixteen years working there, I could have had a simple answer to what was to me a very simple question. And then he really hit the roof. Thursday was our finishing day... Mrs Barnsley obviously used to do the wages up, did the clerical work on the firm's side, work side, "You can go Thursday, this Thursday." I said "Fine." In fact, it was a good idea. It gave me a day to prepare, what tools I need, to get to my new job.

Denys. You had your own tools with you?

Leal. Yes, yeah. There were some things, you see, that he was very, quite good at really, you see. After I had been there about two and a half years, he brought in a scheme whereby, because it was still stressful getting tools, because we hadn't really got over, the country, we hadn't really got over the War, so he then gave, allowed us five shillings a month, something like that, to purchase our own tools, and in some cases, where he was - he had this spare job, part-time job, going to teacher training.

Denys. You obviously had to work your way, from the village, you got to know the young lady, who was sitting ...

Leal. Waiting her turn.

Janet Fairbanks.

36.00. Denys. Waiting for her turn. Janet Fairbanks. I've known Janet for many many years.

Janet. You must have some of William's lardy cakes ...

Denys. Yes, Will's lardy cakes.

Janet. They do deserve a mention!

Denys. Janet, you married Will Fairbanks. When was this?

Janet. 1956.

Denys. He was not English, he was

Janet. Austrian.

Denys. Austrian. And he was a baker by trade.

Janet. Yes.

Denys. How did you meet him, and how did he come to the village here?

Janet. It's a big story. Well, I was brought up in the village. At about 16, 17, 18, I sort of noticed Willy. He was already married.

Denys. Oh, he was married, here, was he – beforehand?

Janet. But she left. Nothing to do with Willy. I always liked Willy, from the word go. There were big troubles in the family about me.

Denys. Where did you live, at that stage.

Janet. Down at The Cross. Under the churchyard. 3 Church Road. In the cottages.

Denys. Your mother and father owned it?

Janet. No, I lost my father at nine years old. 1943. He worked at the rubber factory. He didn't have to go to war because they were doing war work there.

Denys. TP?

Janet. That's right. And he was coming home one day, one night, January 14th, and there were some girls in their road, dancing about, and one put her arm out and knocked my father .

Lorna. At Stroud?

Janet. Yeah. Red House. Knocked my father flying off the motor bike and killed him.

Denys. But tell me, how did you meet Leal and Lorna?

Janet. Well, I've known them all my life, being up here, but we met through Dorothy Richards, didn't we?

Lorna. Yes, I was just trying to remember ...

Janet. Yeah, yeah.

Denys. Dorothy, who went on to marry ...

Leal. You've got the wrong one ...

Denys. Which one have I got?

Janet. Dorothy, she had Ivy and .. lovely blonde sisters they were, four of them, weren't they. Years ago, when me and my sister. Years ago, when me and my sister were about four, five, six, I might have been, my mother developed TB and she had to go away to a sanatorium, and she had nowhere to put us kids. Granddad was there, but he couldn't look after us. Nobody wanted us, to take us in, no family, nothing, and it started to come to a time when Dr Clifford ...



Dr Clifford

Denys. Dear old Doc Cliff ... 'peg-leg'.

Janet. And he said "Have you got anywhere to put the kids yet, and she said "No." And so he said we would have to go into a home, or somewhere. For the time being. Anyway, my mum met Mrs Richards in the road, and she said "Have you got anywhere for those kids yet?" Because her husband was in the war. And my mum said "No.", and she said "I'll take them". So Mrs Richards, from the goodness of her heart, took me and my sister for eighteen months, all during the war, and ...

Lorna. Big ask, you know ..

Janet. Yes, it was a big ask. And my dad continued to work at the rubber factory, and she took us in for eighteen months.

Denys. And how did you meet Leal?

Janet. Well, I've always known them, but not socially, but then Lorna was looking after Mrs Richards one day. Her carer run away, didn't she? You went up to do her eye drops and that ...

Lorna. Yes, yes I did.

Janet. And then we had a cup of tea, and you said "Why don't you bring Mrs Richards up here, for a cup of tea?" Which we did. Because I have always looked out for Mrs Richards ever since she brought me up. She always comes to me for Christmas.

Denys. Even now?

Janet. No, she's died now. She still gets a Christmas wreath, from me.

Lorna. That's how we got to know each other, really.

Janet. That's how we got to know each other. And at the time, and then ,during that time Willy was ill, wasn't he, my husband was ill, and he was going to die ...

Denys. 1950s?

Janet. Oh no, 1970s. I was married to him for 50 years. Something like that. I was married in 1956 and he died in 2000. How long is that?

Denys. 44 years.

Janet. I met him in the village, he had trouble with his first wife, and he was living where I am now.

Denys. And he used to walk up the street? To beside the house ...

Janet, That's right, the bakery.

Denys. And all the bakery was done there? And he was the village baker, of course, for years.

Janet. For years. I don't know how many. And as soon as I was 21, I married him.

Leal. There was Mrs, what was her name?

Janet. Daphne, Daphne (inaudible – Betty Hay?... Eveley ??) used to look after her.

Talking at once, then Lorna She went away, and she asked me. I used to take her meals up.

Janet. She loved it when you went up.

Lorna. I'd go up there and tap on the door, and she'd be in there, singing.

Janet. It was a big thing. In the War, no money, nothing, she took us two kids in.

Lorna. Not many people would do that ...

Ends 44.18

Second tape, WAV 1003

00.00. Denys . Janet you told me you were part of the Aburrow family

Janet. Yes.



Men sawing at Drayton Mill



Drayton Mill, with Nellie Aburrow

Denys. They were part of a very large family here.

Janet Yes.

Denys. Wheelwrights were they?

Janet. Yes. My granddad lived in the cottages I was brought up in. They didn't own them then, and my uncle Alfred, that's his brother, lives at Drayton Mill, with his sister Auntie Nell, Nelly Aburrow, and there was another brother called Harry. He was nothing to do with the wheel-wrighting, nothing at all and over the years Auntie Nell hurt her leg, she had to have her leg off, and she became bed-ridden from then on because she had the most hideous wooden leg and

couldn't wear it. Uncle Alfred and my granddad were the wheelwrights. They did all the carts and wheels

01.11. Denys. And where did this take place?

Janet. Uncle Alfred was down at Drayton Mill ...

Denys Actually at the Mill itself?

Janet. Yes, and Granddad was up where the Spa shop is. That all belonged to my Granddad, where the shop is now.. We went on for years and we had the most wonderful machinery. I love it. It was great big belts going round, and sawing ...

Denys. You've got pictures?

Janet. No I haven't, only memories. I've got a picture of Drayton Mill.

Leal. They also owned, the two brothers, the field where the present vicarage is.

Janet. Yeah, that was our meadow and somehow or other, they were stupid in them days, somebody offered Uncle Alfred £800..... No he put £80 down, and before he knew it he had sold Drayton Mill.

Denys. Who did he sell Drayton Mill to?

Janet. I don't know, not in the first instance.

Denys. What year would you be talking about?

Janet. I would have been eight or something.

Denys. The 1930s?

Janet. Yeah. We had a horse and cart. We used to go up and down Drayton, on the horse and cart to see Auntie Nelly. She was quite a character because everybody used to go down, and there used to be chickens in the house, cats and... it was a tip. They used to drink the river water, no sewage or anything. It was lovely.

Leal. She was an ardent animal lover, she had quite a number of cats.

Janet. Yes, she did. Cats and chickens.

Leal. And Dick Lanham and myself, about the same age, we were friends.

Denys. Dick Langham used to live and work at Riplington?

Leal. Riplington. His father worked for one of the Wrens. We used to go around together and mainly go down there to play in Wrens field, and he came out one day, (*Arthur Wren*) and caught us herding is young heifers up into the corner of the field. Just for a bit of fun. He shooed us off from that and we had nothing to occupy our time, so we went round to Nelly's at the Mill, in the house there, and we had a habit of calling on her quite frequently, she always seemed to have a bag of sweets there... give us a couple each. But this particular day, we went round to ask if we could borrow one of her cats. She said "What do you want it

for?" "We want to go ferreting", there were rabbits about then, and she hit the roof as we wanted to use the cat as a ferret. She hit the roof and I think it was four or five weeks before we got another sweet. But she was a dear old girl.

05.47 Denys. Now, tell me. Do either of you remember Laurie Smith. Did you ever have any dealings with Laurie?

Janet. Yeah, I was friends with him. My mother used to push him in his pram, that's how long we have known him. I've known him all the time he has been growing up, and since, and then he went off wandering off, didn't he, on Dartmoor?

Denys. It was Bodmin Moor.

Janet. Yes, he and I used to write, right up to the end, till he was taken ill.

Lorna. He's still alive though?

Janet. No, he died. He went to Bodmin Moor, didn't he? He left East Meon, and he went to Bodmin Moor, and he met a woman, and she took him in to do odd jobs. She had a lovely cottage there.

Leal. He actually went there to start with, came back that evening and became deadly ill and wanted a drink of water.

Denys. And he fell asleep on the hearth; he'd just been walking down the main road and fell asleep, and that's how the story started.

Janet. She took him in, and apparently she was a relation of someone high up in London, Was it an Archbishop? He used to do his leatherwork, didn't he? Oh I knew him.

Ends 7.52

Third tape. Deleted.

Fourth tape, 1005

Denys. You said there was somewhere where somebody had a shoe shop. Bell ...

Leal. George Barrow used to live over here, Kevin's father who collects the electricity readings.

Denys. And the Bell was the Old Bell, Bell Inn, wasn't it?

Janet. No, Bell Cottage was next door to Chris someone (*Reynolds*).

Leal. Bell Cottage, the part nearest the road, sits almost right on the road.

Janet & Leal. Years before that was Bill Paste on the other side of the road where the Garage is now, where Mr. Pink used to live. Then Mr. Witt bought it. He was an old shoe mender, and he had a great big club foot. He had one short leg, with a great big club foot on his shoe. Then we had Mr. Coles. He used to fill the accumulators up for the wireless. He had a little shop where Herbie Goddard. ...

Leal. He was quite an engineer.

Denys. Cyril Cole?

Janet, Yes, he was an author.

Leal. That's right, He and Miss Manning, who lived this side of where Cyril lived, wrote together as Manning Coles. Then in latter years Cyril Coles also wrote a different type of book under the name of Gatehouse.

Denys. Gatehouse, it is now called the Gaitehouse. Glenthorne and Gatehouse are now joined. Gaitehouse is where David Goddard used to live.

Janet. That's right, he had his little shop there. Years and years ago. And we used to go up to get paraffin there, or we used to take the accumulator there.

Denys You emptied them out and you put acid in it.

Janet. That's right. There was no toilets, it was all up the garden, you know, no water no bathrooms when I got married.

Leal. Francis Gate was the name he used to write under. His subject there was mostly about war years, and he was telling me one day he had to be precise in what he wrote, because if he wasn't, there would be someone there who would possibly read part of his book, even if they did not read the whole book, because they would be on him like a ton of bricks for not getting it correct.

03.17 Janet I've made a picture of it. It's obviously a copy; I've got a Will, 1755.

Denys. Not your will ...

Janet. Not my will, John Aburrow. It's got funny writing, you've got to really read it to... there leave one blanket ... it's a last will and testament, and that, or a pillow, they're leaving a pillow for someone, or a blanket, or a piece of pewter, things like that... not money wise. It's 1755, John Aburrow.

Lorna. Janet's got a photograph – don't know if you've got anyone else who's got them, before the river was done, where the cows used to go...

Janet. But I haven't got anything really spectacular, you know ...

Leal. Going back to Cyril Cole, he was an extremely good engineer, apart from his writing, and he made this motor boat, really, about that long (2 ft.) and about that wide absolutely to detail, he used to sail it up and down the river here.

Denys. Not duck racing but boat racing.

Lorna. Was that after the river was done, Leal, or before?

Leal. Well before. When it had water in it.

Janet. When we used to go up to Church, and you used to do the small flowers and I used to read all the things on the floor, I did come across an Aburrow there

somewhere, of course it's all worn off now. I don't know how true it is, but apparently my name was something to do with the Huguenots.

Denys. Huguenots? They're French?

Janet. Yes, I don't know nothing about that. I know that all the money that came from Aburrows came from my mother's mother.



Girls from Aburrow family on the wall of Wheelwright Cottage, Riverside behind

Denys. Which Aburrow had the house across the road (Wheelwrights)

Janet. That was Jack Aburrow. He was the son of the third brother that had nothing to do with it. They didn't pinch it but they got it out of my granddad.

Denys. Did he not go to Australia in the end?

Janet Yeah.

06.40 Denys. Because we tried to buy that house.

Leal. Jack Aburrow, the one that Janet is talking about, built that wall that goes from the road up to Wheelwright Cottage. That's how it came to get its name.

Denys. Alright!

Janet. He weren't a wheelwright!

Denys. Right the way round?

Leal. Yeah.

Janet. He was in the war, and he wasn't ever apprenticed to anyone for that, they just came back, him and his brother, and by then my Mum was married to Bert Roberts, and a lot of tittle tattle went on – "keep it in the family", and this and that. And that was how they got it.

Denys. Your Mother is Freda?

Janet. Yeah.

Denys. Of course, famous for Freda's gate.

Janet. Yeah. And when she was 18 she went up the Church spire.

Lorna. She climbed it!

Janet. She went right up the top.

Denys. Climbed the church spire. Freda Aburow?

Janet. Only the old ones, they know it.

Lorna. There's no old ones left.

Denys. Freda ...?

Janet. Aburrow.

Denys. And then she married who ...?

Janet. Norgate, my Dad, he came from Privett. My own Dad got killed. Then she married a village man called Rusty Blackman. She'd known him for years. She was an old sweetheart of his and when my Dad died he come to see my Mum, and he said "I think we could make a nice family because we had us two kids, and my Mum had no money and Granddad there, you know to look after. He was in the army, so he got army leave to come home. He married her, went back. He was dead within a fortnight. Just like that. At Arnhem he died. I don't know how long it went on, and then the other one turned up. He was a stepfather, and he was a stepfather.

Denys. I knew Bert

Janet. Did you? Did you know him as a nice bloke then?

(Janet and Lorna laugh)

Denys. No!

Janet. Anyway he was all right outside

Ends at 09.38

Fifth tape. 1006

Leal (mid paragraph) When Cyril Coles passed on, was it Jasper Steer that used the workshops as a little factory for making chicken cages. How the hell he employed Fred Horsted and Peter Cole to do it.

Denys. Peter Cole?

Leal. Peter Cole, yeah.

Denys. And where were the workshops?



*Aerial view of Glenthorne yard, with
Goddard's garage*

Leal. It was the garage (*Glenthorne House yard*), and then Alan Blackman had it after.

Lorna. Alan Blackman didn't actually have the garage bit.

Leal. He actually had the side part. Out the back. That's when Herbie Goddard had the main part, the garage.

I think it was Herbie Lambert – I'm not too sure about that, but a Lambert anyway, that farmed at Spyglass; they don't call it Spyglass now.

Denys. Spion Kop?

Leal. On the left of where the Tosdevines are. It got its name Spyglass from the ground up there you could see right the way round, both sides of the house to the village. This one had been, there was quite a large family of Lamberts.

Denys. Related in any way to the Peter Lamberts at Langrish?

Leal. Yes. This one had been at one point a furniture maker, a cabinet maker. My father bought for me quite a number of his tools that he didn't use any more. Jasper Steers had a little lorry run about at that time, and went up and brought them home for me.

Denys. Lorna do you want to say something about your self. You're a Petersfield Girl.

Lorna. I'm not a true East Meoner

Denys. You see, I'm not a true East Meoner. Do you know why?

Lorna. You haven't fallen in the river?

Denys. I have fallen in the river! I got wet alright. It's because I went to what I thought was West Meon. Westbury House, West Meon, Petersfield, Hampshire, that was the address, telephone number West Meon 242. I thought Westbury House was West Meon. It's not!

Janet/Lorna. What is it then?

Denys. East Meon.

Janet/Lorna. Eh? East Meon?

3.30 Denys. Parish of East Meon. It comes down Cricket Pitch Lane, then turns towards West Meon and cuts up Chappets Lane, because Chappets is in East Meon, No, I'm slightly wrong about that - it cuts up behind the wood behind Westbury and towards Whitewool Farm. Westbury is definitely in East Meon!

Janet. And for years, my address has been 'The Square, East Meon'. And everyone I speak to says there is no such place. It has always been 'The Square'.

Leal. It's not actually a square, is it? It's a triangle. A cousin of mine was trying to find me, and he was looking for The Square, and people told him 'there's no such place in East Meon'. I've only lived there 50 years!

Leal. That goes back as far as East Meon School, and none of the pupils – and I don't include the teachers in this – know their geometry ... they don't know the difference between a triangle and a square, basically.

Janet. I used to go to the school up here. We didn't learn anything.

Leal. This is nothing now to do with East Meon or I know of West Meon come to that, but Droxford was one of the major towns, almost, in this area. My birth certificate was registered at Droxford Court House, when Droxford had its own Magistrates Court.

Denys. Droxford's address is 'such and such Droxford Southampton'

Janet Then in the war we had all the Canadian soldiers up The Court House. I remember all those. There was where I saw my first black man.

Denys. I remember them in Westbury Park. They came in one night, just came off the road, past the stables, came up in the park, and they all bivouacked under the trees, up on the left there. We were told not to go near them.

End of Interview