

Joan Grimmer (nee Stevens) was the daughter of Annie Cooper.

I didn't live in Enderby until 1930 when I was 10 years old, but I was already familiar with it, spending Christmas and other holidays there. My grandma Cooper kept a shop at the top of Chapel Street, which sold general groceries and also mild and butter beer, kept in kegs in the cellar, and which people fetched in jugs. My great aunt Nell James lived at the Firs, my great aunt Beatrice Bailey and her husband Bert managed the Plough Inn at the top of Mill Hill, my mother's sister Bertha Westacott in Connery Lane and my mother's other sister Doris Mansfield lives in Stewart Avenue, the house belonged to the Mental Hospital, where her husband was chief nurse.

At the centre of things, was the Firs. This is a fairly large house which when I knew it had a coach house, outhouses, which were earlier stables, a large garden with a high brick wall behind which was an orchard and then a further long garden stretching almost to Hall Walk. This house was bought by my great grandfather Lockton, so that his children would always have a home, and it belonged to them all when he died. These children were my grandmother, Clara (Cooper), my great aunt Nell (James), Beatrice (Bailey), and three other daughters and a son. When I first went to Enderby, Nell lived there. But later, Nell took over Grandma's shop and Grandma went to live in the Firs. I also, with my family, lived there for some years. Later, Beatrice, who had moved to manage the Red Cow in Leicester Forest East, bought out her sisters and brother. Later when she and Nell were both widowed, the two of them lived there. Beatrice also owned several houses in Enderby: A row of three or four houses at the top of the high street, opposite the Firs, and round the corner of the Cross, including the large house beyond which was the Co-op grocery shop. My cousin Peggy Chandler (Mansfield) lived there with her husband and three children for a time. After I was already married, my mother and her second husband lived in the first of these cottages above the Havelock Pub. Beatrice also owned a group of cottages below the Firs. I remember a woman called Alice Warren lived in one of them, my grandma in another, and a Norfolk woman named Mrs. Townsend in another. Auntie Beet's other houses were a group opposite the Chapel Street Shop. I sometimes went with my mother to collect rents there.

To go back to the plough it had a wooden Skittle alley. And you could play "devil among the tailors". At the side was a field where every year around St John's day, St. John being the name of the village Church, this fair with roundabouts and swings and stalls, etc, was called the Wakes. After it had gone, we children used to search the field for pennies. At the side of the Plough and this field was a pathway with an orchard at the side where we used to go scrumping (stealing apples). The pathway led to the Warren where there were two fields, where we played, Pen Crag and Pancheon Field. It was there that the working part of the quarry was. On the other side of Mill Hill were the crushers. In the school holidays, children brought canisters of tea and sandwiches at midday to their fathers working on the crushers. Behind the crushers was a part of the quarry which was no longer working. It was forbidden to go there, but of course we played there. Another favourite place was the railway line servicing the Quarry. It ran under a bridge at the bottom of Seine Lane. The bravest among us would walk across the bridge parapet. We went birds-nesting in the hedges there. Sometimes someone would find an empty nest and call out "A nest of four eggs". When the others rushed to see, the finder said "In a bullshun (spelling)". Could this have been an unknowing corruption of "abortion"? Another of our sayings was

'yakaduckie' meaning 'to throw a stone'. I read somewhere that "yack" came from the Latin "jacere" to throw, and stemmed from Roman Times. We had a rhyme about Seine Lane:

"Pancake Day, Pancake Day/If you don't give us a holiday, we'll all run away./Where shall we run?/Down Seine Lane,/Here comes Mr. Capers/With a big fat cane"

We told scary stories about how Mr. Capers behaved in class, no doubt exaggerated. He seemed an old man to us, but must have been barely 30. I went to the school across the church. It must have taken ten year olds then. The school for younger children was called the "Council School". Our headmaster was called Mr. Jackson. He had twins, Nancy and Peter who are my age and an older daughter Elsie. The boys and girls were separated into two playgrounds. At playtime we girls played ring games such as "in and out the windows" "poor Mary sits a weeping" etc. We played Snobs (five stones) and a game called "Sheep sheep come home" where you are in danger of being caught by a child playing a wolf. I won a scholarship and went to the Newark Girls School in Leicester. When I was about fifteen years old, I played at the school's first hockey team, whose games took place on Saturday mornings. Sat. afternoon I played with Enderby ladies. I remember one of the enemy players was Grace Evans, whose father was a butcher who was in a yard off the corner of the Dog and Gun.

At the corner of Seine Lane and Connery Lane, there was a piece of land on which there was an old vehicle which we called the "break". It was some sort of old fashioned bus, which a long bench on each side. My mother told me it was used to take people to Leicester when she was a girl. A little way up Connery Lane, lived a family called Chapman. At the side of their house was a large sort of shed, with a threshing machine in it. Further up the lane lived the Cherry family. People used to send messages to Mr. Cherry for him to lay bets on horses for them. I believe this was illegal at the time.

On the other side of the road from my grandmother's shop, was a farmhouse belonging to David Bradshaw. At the back of the congregational church there was a narrow path leading to his fields. In those days there were paths through the fields (rights of way) and you could walk almost to Thurlaston along these paths.

Back to school!

My teacher's name, at the school opposite the church, was Mrs Peabody. I remember the names of one or two of the pupils in my class. There was Freeman Tuckwood (we called after him in the street: 'Freeman Tuckwood can't spell!'), Dorothy Tansley, who lived at the mill, and Teddy Ashmere, a farmer's son, who married Doreen Sharp, the daughter of a farmer whose farm was on the Hardwick. Other teachers were Mr. West, who had been going out for years with a very pretty girl and everyone asked 'will he ever marry her?' Mr. West's sister was Mrs. Mayne who was a teacher at the council school. I got a scholarship from my school, so it must have taken children from 10-14 years. I was also friendly with a girl called Grace Gilliver, but I suspect she was younger than me and I probably knew her from the Girl Guides. I also knew Thora Harris, who was a year above me at the Newarke Girls' School. Her mother was Lizzie Harris, another teacher at the Council School, who was a leading light in the village, doing a lot of work in the theatricals, dancing, etc.