

REFLECTIONS ON LIFE IN 1918 WAKERING BY NELLIE GROVES

I was 10 years old when we came to live in the village.

With a baby in the family fresh milk was needed, and as Millers Farm made only one delivery a day I used to go to the farm to collect some where the cows, although in the shed, half scared me to death!

Collins shop provided the odds and ends of shopping we were always forgetting, the main supplies came from Rogers. From one counter you bought butter, cheese, lard and bacon, all weighed and wrapped while you waited. Across the other side of the shop was another counter, in front of which were stacked tins of biscuits, the tins having glass fronts. From this counter you bought dried fruit, tea, sugar and cake, kept in a glass cabinet, also rice from a bin. These purchases went into paper cones which the assistant made himself by rolling then up, he added up your bill, and you paid at the desk.

Thursday was one of the best days of the week for me, for the I bought "The Children's Newspaper" from Miss Gray who had the newsagents side of a double fronted shop which today is the insurance agents office near the Co-op.

We were fairly regular customers of Golden Woods the shoe repairers. The shop was small and dim but Mr. Woods and his wife were always friendly, often asking us about school etc. Sells the butchers was another friendly shop, I got on well with him and his wife.

Across the road from school was Olivers sweetshop but here I did more window shopping than sweet buying, my pocket money being spent on the school library, nevertheless it was a pleasant little shop and Mr. Oliver never seemed to mind how long you took over your small purchases.

Ayletts on the corner of North Street was a small shop that always seemed to have stepped out of a Dickens book with its big green and gold canisters on the back shelf, these were marked 1, 2, 3, 4, although what, if anything, they contained I never knew"!

Fords or Reynolds at Christmas time was an Aladdin's Cave. There amidst the decorations were toys, games, dolls, books, handkerchiefs, and all sorts of presents. During the rest of the year you could buy lino, small furnishings, cups and saucers, etc. there. You could even pay your National Deposit Health Insurance there!

This is some of the old village of Wakering I remember from my childhood days.