

Snowdrop Cottage,
Bucklebury Slade,
Reading, Berks,
RG7 6TH
31.08.98.

Dear Mrs. Harrison,

I have lived in the Slade since 1955 and knowing how interested I am in the old ways Mrs. Cairns gave me your letter to read. Long ago, A lady came to look at Snowdrop Cottage, the thatched part was her grandmother's, so I wonder if the lady was you? The one part which is four rooms is now tiled, and Mrs. Rumbold who lived here when we came still lives here, the Mays owned it before, then went to a property behind Peach's Stores (Long Grove). We have put in Mod. Cons. A dining room with bedroom above as we needed three bedrooms. So from a two up, two down, it makes it a three up three down with one family, before being one up one down, one up with sort of landing bedroom one down, for two families, I did not believe what is my kitchen with bedroom above till I went to a museum and saw what I call a rick ladder, which was the way to bed.

All the names you mention, I have heard. You are right about Sis Froud, nee, Goodenough, her nephew now lives in at Eling Farm, his Wife Ann and their two sons, one has moved back to Parsonage Farm just along the Pang Valley.

Moving back to the Slade, Joe Paulin lives at Beechlyn (top of the hill), Morgan Briggs at Cintra up the Green, Stan Green's City Path, I believe there was a cottage called Pear Leaf in this area, but it was taken down some time ago.

The butter you mention in the Sellwood Larder was made at Holly Farm, a real treat, I was lead to believe. The well at Ferndale is the one now under Mrs. Cairn's cooker. Mrs. Lil Sellwood told me her father (a Fisher) would not have any other water than from Blind John's Well. So each day they had to go along Spring path and as you say some used a yoke for carrying. It is still a good well and we would use it in an emergency rather than the one we have at Snowdrop, we use it to water the garden. There are no septic tanks draining down the hill on the common.

Mrs. Mary Paulin, her husband, Sid, Lil, and Bert Sellwood, Kate Paulin, her husband known as Furzy Paulin, are all buried in the Upper Common Cemetery, I attended all their funerals. I think Mrs. Briggs and her husband George are there too. When the Lipscomb left, what was the Sellwood's cottage where Janet and Hazel were born, Mrs. Briggs pulled it down, her son-in-law, Brother of Stan built a garage and she used it as we used to use the old washhouses, (a very house-proud lady was Mrs B). Now a Mrs Addis lives there, she has made several changes, but it still only has two bedrooms.

Mrs Butler had Mrs Cairns cottage when we came here, before that she rented the cottage the other side of the chapel (now called Slade Cottage). A room was always kept for the owner, but I cannot remember the name but I expect it is one you mention. Back to Snowdrop. What was your grandmother's name? I think it is the name I have

tried finding out. We bought the cottage from Bernard Fisher, he had decided to sell having moved Mrs. Nora Booker to a property they owned in Newbury. Mrs. Hole who owned the Tudor Cafe in Newbury had had it as a weekend home before this and my husband was brought to visit, as his Aunt was a friend of Mrs. Hole (1938). He did not remember it, the walk over the common, yes. He was fourteen years of age. The Fisher's were here before this, and I think Bernard was born here. Then Dad Fisher built Haycroft, Bernard built Lyndhurst when he got married, he had bought land at Hopgoods green.

You mentioned Cecilia Millson. Her husband told me he served his apprenticeship under the Fishers in the big shed, which is still here. I have an idea the two daughters were of the Plymouth Brethren. They went to live on the Cold Ash road. Molly Dennis, as she was has recently gone to live at Shaw. But Sheila Kent, (nee Dennis), still lives at Tuffets, Turner's Green, she looks after the chapel, she has two sons and a daughter. The second cottage up from the green in the Slade has been altered a lot. It was the Nook with Mr. And Mrs. Brewer in residence till he died, then she left. My goats lived in the meadow it being a water meadow full of wildflowers they loved all the different herbs, etc. Now alas all gone it is grazed by a horse. Joe Paulin has grandchildren now, who live a very different life but the Slade weaves patterns between people that have strange turnings and the mystic of it all is I find people turn up in all sorts of places that have associations with it. My godmother had visited Bucklebury to see friends many years before we came here.

You live in Worcs. We lived at Great Witley for two years before we came to Berkshire. It took us four years to find Snowdrop and thought we would not be able to buy it, it did not reach its reserve price. Mrs. Lipscomb told me the housekeeper of one of the people would not come to such an isolated place. Long gone are those days of pony and trap rides to Newbury, though Joe Paulin comes back up the Slade with a little cart all ribbons and bows having taken the Bride to Church. George Lailey was still working at Turner's Green that is how I come to have plates and bowls. His bowl lathe and I believe his hut is at the White Knights Park, Reading Museum.

I must type this letter so you can read it. I am still remembering things. Eddie was Stan Green's brother married to Betty Briggs. Hazel Sellwood had the curved spine. I was told her mother Lil Sellwood fell down the stairs at the cottage. It was an awkward stair. Mrs. Addis's stairs are just as dangerous to come down. Hazel died when we had the flu outbreak. Janet has two grandchildren her daughter Josephine married a boy from Brightwell come Sotwell. I do not know about the two sons, but Janet still lives near the Bladebone, Chapel Row. I really must stop. My husband has come back from bird watching, so it is on with the breakfast.

Yours sincerely,

Barbara Mann.

P. S. Bert Selwood was killed in 1972. He was on his way to Janet's, they owned the Chapel Road P.O. and shop. A van hit him and knocked him from his bicycle.