

NEWBURY MARKET.

The narrow street in Newbury, a left turning off Bartholomew Street, has disappeared and with it, the Cattle Market. No longer can children share the ecstasy of expectation we four children experienced on Thursday mornings - Market day. We travelled the five miles from Bucklebury to Newbury in a horse and cart, often sharing the accommodation with a fattened pig which was destined to come under the auctioneer's hammer. We would arrive soon after nine-thirty to find Market Street a scene of bustling activity and would make for the huge wrought iron gates of the Market. Once inside we went off on our own to explore the sheep pens, the stables, the pig enclosures and the cattle ring. Young calves were a source of excited admiration and we each selected our favourite and long to buy it. Sometimes a farmer would allow us to help feed a calf from a bucket. In due course we would find a place from which to watch the cattle and horses paraded round the ring and observe, with fascination, the patting, pinching, pulling and leg-feeling which, presumably, revealed the animal's worth.

The horse and cart belonged to 'Grandma Sellwood'. Once a week a rickety old bus belonging to a Mr Howlett provided transport to Newbury. He took shopping lists for those not travelling and returned with the purchases at tea time.