

SCHOOL MEMORIES by Rosemary Smith nee Plain

I started East Winch school on a sunny day at the beginning of Easter term 1957. The only other new pupil that term was Paul Cawston. Mrs Mack was our infant teacher and Miss Smith taught the older children.

I have only happy memories of my school days, perhaps marred by the visit of the school doctor who gave us our immunisations in a small room at the back of school.

Each morning, before lessons began, we played in the playground until Mrs Mack rung the bell at 9 o'clock. Then we had to line up, stand to attention, turn, then march into school. After the register was called on Monday mornings, we filed to Miss Smiths desk to pay for our dinners for the week, they cost 5 shillings.

Prayer time, was a prayer said by Miss Smith ,and the Lords prayer said by everyone; then we all sang a hymn. My favorite was number 7 in the hymn books " Summer suns are glowing over land and sea". Mid morning we had a bottle of milk each, drunk with a straw. In the winter the bottles were placed in the hearth so the coal fire would warm the milk. Mrs Mack had a biscuit tin from which we could buy 2 Royal Scott biscuits or 2 rich tea for a penny.

Dinners were served on tables that were lined up in the big classroom. Hot dinners were delivered in a van and Mrs Wright and Mrs Bunting served the meals. There was one boy who particularly liked custard and often went back for "seconds". Mrs Bunting called him "Peter, Peter the custard eater".

Mrs Dennis was our playtime supervisor and joined in games with us. We played Farmers in his den, Poor Mary is weeping and many more. Each year we had a film show, all the children from both classrooms gathered in the infants room, some had to sit on desks as we patiently waited while Mr Slater set up his projector with large reels of films. At the end of watching the films we gave our thanks by Miss Smith saying "3 cheers for Mr Slater, hip hip hooray" and all us children joined in.

A lesson I remember well was "music, movement and mime". in summer the large radio loudspeaker was taken into the playground and we sat on raffia mats waiting for "programmes for schools" to begin. The presenter was Miss Persival, and when she said "Good morning children" we replied to the radio "Good morning Miss Persival" then did our excersises to music.

I also enjoyed country dancing. The desks and chairs were moved to the sides of the classroom and Miss Smith put a record on the old gramophone and taught us dances. I remember learning The Durham reel and Circumference Seven. Once a year during summer term we would all board a bus outside the school and be taken to another school for sports. It was held in a different primary school each year. We wore coloured ribbon sashes so each school could be identified. I wasn't particulaly good at sports but I often got entered into high jump.

In the corner of the classroom the maypole was stored until, each May 1st, it was taken into the

playground. The 2 teachers held the pole while we children danced around it, holding on to coloured ribbons that hung from the top of pole. The dancing didn't last long as the ribbons soon tangled as we wove in and out with them.

In September we had a harvest festival service in the church. All children brought fruit and vegetables from their parents garden. My Grandad (Fred Harper) had an allotment and he always gathered his best produce. He carefully washed the carrots, beetroot etc, and tied them up with string for us children to take to church.

We had school outings which we looked forward to. I remember visiting the fire station, Seamans dairies and Mr Funnels farm at Grandcourt. Sometimes we would go for nature walks along school lane and collect leaves and wild flowers.

I remember Miss Smith teaching us to knit. My first, and only, garment was a babys pink wool vest. It took so long to complete, the bottom had faded before I finished at the shoulders.

Sometimes we got the band instruments out. The favorite was the cymbals but as there was only one set I never remember using them; I usually played the triangle. I passed my cycle proficiency test while at school. I'm sure that I must have done English and sums, but I have no real memories of these except chanting the times table.

At home time, 3-30pm, we said a prayer; I still remember it.....'Lord keep us safe this night, Secure from all our fears, May Angels guard us while we sleep, Till morning light appears. Amen'. Then we would race to the main road, where my Mum (Peggy Plain) the first "lollypop lady" showed us safely over the road.

Most children called in at the village shop to buy sweets from Mr Peeling. I liked aniseed balls; they cost 2d, and a bar of Cadburys chocolate was 3d. HAPPY DAYS.

My sister Angela and brother Leonard also attended the school the same time as me.

Later, after I married, my 2 children were pupils at the school. My mother Peggy Plain (nee Harper) had attended between 1931 and 1945, and my Grandmother Lizzy Harper (nee Brown) attended between 1906 and 1920 approx.

My Great Grandfather Ben Brown was a school manager and is pictured in the photo. With him is Rev Alvis, Sir William Lancaster and head teacher Miss Bolt and another 2 unknown.