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## MEMORIES OF SHERFIELD 60 YEARS AGO

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During the past 60 years, many changes have taken place in Sherfield, and it occurred to me that people new to the Parish might like to know a little of Sherfield's past.

My memories start with the Shop and Post Office (now converted to Weston House flats). They were owned and run by the Jackson family; Henry and his sisters Dorothy and Kate. Their village shop, typical of many in those days, sold just about everything - kettles, saucepans, cups and saucers, brooms; also a large variety of groceries including home cured bacon, bread, cakes and lard-cake produced in their own brick oven.

In the garden behind the shop, bailed Hazel wood was stored, ready for burning in the brick oven. The Jacksons also kept pigs which were fattened for slaughter. Venners of Reading came once a month to kill the pigs while local housewives stood by to wait for the 'chitterlings'. The pig slaughter was quite a local event!

Opposite the shop were the Stables and Garage (now a small house) from which a horse-drawn delivery van made its rounds. Later, when motorised transport arrived, the horse was reserved for bad weather. In winter, the local roads were left uncleared, making them impassable to motor traffic.

In later years the shop was sold to Millers of Reading. The Post Office moved to where it is today. It was still being run by the Jacksons who added an extension in which lived the Ward family who formerly baked bread for the shop.

Percy Sims

*(More to follow next month)*

### CHURCHYARD SPRING CLEAN

We are looking for help to give the St Leonard's Churchyard a Spring clean and Tidy up  
**on Saturday, April 4th, starting at 10.30 am**  
If you can help, please phone Tom Newman 882596



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## MEMORIES OF SHERFIELD 60 YEARS AGO

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This month we leave Jackson's Stores and travel towards our boundary with Bramley.

Next to Jackson's Store are two cottages. In one lives Winnie and Victor Bulpitt, and it was from this cottage that their father and mother ran the newspaper business for the village over many years. The 'locals' used to collect their newspapers from here and some were delivered round the village.

The thatched cottage which faces the Village Green was originally two small cottages. Ruth Ellis, the last woman to be hung for murder, lived in one for a short time. Next to the thatched cottage stood a row of five cottages; the last of which had a Smithy's workshop at the rear. Four of these cottages still stand today. No doubt, there are some in the village today who can recall their childhood days in these thatched cottages.

Alexander Cottages (which have recently been renovated) belong to the Lord of the Manor, the Earl and Countess of Winchelsea and Nottingham, who resided at Buckfield manor (now North Foreland School). The tenants of these cottages were all employees of the Lord of the Manor.

Next, we come to Holt Cottage standing off Bramley Road and facing the Green and The Poplars, which stood on the bend of the road. The Poplars was originally a public house called the *Jolly Miller* and when it was closed down it was renamed *The Poplars*, no doubt because of two tall Poplar trees which stood on the edge of the Green. Before the houses were built along the Bramley road (where the bus shelter is today), there were chicken houses owned by my Grandfather who lived at Holt Cottages. Also there was a large garage which housed the Carrier's van that travelled between Basingstoke and Reading.

From Alexander Cottages, down to the river were two large fields, one belonging to the Manser's and the other to the Jackson's. Manser's started to build houses in the field in 1923/24 and this was the start of Northfield Road.

*Percy Sims*

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Next to Jackson's Stores, along the Reading road (now the Old reading road), was a Cobbler and Harness repair shop, together with two cottages owned by Agnes Smith and her brother Walter. Then there were two thatched cottages which were demolished to make way for a Garage, petrol pumps and large workshops with an adjoining house, owned and built by Fred Goring. In the course of time the garage and workshops also disappeared to be replaced by the flats at Mill Close.

Next to the garage was a Sweet and Tobacconist Shop, owned and run by Mr & Mrs Vass. Their daughter ~~Cynthia~~ (Mrs Musson) still lives in the house today.   
*grandson Keith Musson*

Along the Old Reading road, a large field stretched from the Vass's Shop to Manser's Builders Yard. Mr and Mrs Manser had their own house there next to the workshops and they also owned this large field. The Mansers were not only Builders but also Undertakers, and coffins were made in the workshop by their carpenter, Frank Grigg. The fields behind Manser's builders yard (before the river) is known as *Lamas* or Common land.

From the outside, the White Hart public house has changed little over the years; however inside there have been significant changes. There used to be a 'public' and a 'private' bar, and built onto the public bar was a small corner room completely enclosed from the rest of the building, save for a small hatch to the inside and a doorway to the outside. In the days of horse-drawn carriages, the coachman used this little room to relax in, while ale was served to them via the hatch. This corner alcove is still there today. Adjacent to the White Hart was a large field - which today is difficult to visualise, since much of it was taken for the new A33 and the link road built by the side of the Post Office. This field was used every year for a large fair owned by Stokes & Blacks, which came to the village every Michaelmas and Whitsun - a high spot in the life of the village at that time!

*Percy Sims*