

From Mrs Betty Read 1 - 4 - 99

Mrs Read's great grandmother Ellen Crowley owned and ran the Bridge Inn and No. 2 The Limes belonged to Mrs Read's parents. Mrs Read was born at No. 2 The Limes and has lived in the same house all her life.

The Bridge Inn was the present Bookshop and Florists. The Bookshop was the Inn and the Florists shop was the residential side of the premises. The present Makers was a shed attached to the end of the property. Mrs Read would often sit in the front room of the house side as a child, with other children from the family, to wait for the adults. As children they were not allowed to lock the back door of No. 2 so that the after hours drinkers could make a hasty exit through the back of the pub and through their cottage when necessary. Ellen Crowley had four sons William, Jack, Tom, the policeman who had one of the largest funerals ever seen in Cowbridge, and Edward and two daughters one of whom emigrated to America and Helen who was drowned in The Thaw as a small child. Mr Phillips - plumber - bought the premises and ran it as a plumber's business. It was left to his nephew Roddy Phillips and he divided the property as it is today. Marjorie, Mrs Phillip's niece had a pottery with kiln where Makers is now.

The two Limes' cottages were used as groomsman's cottages and horses were kept in the adjoining stables - now Joseph' Coat. Later the roof of the stables was raised and it was used as the Sons of Temperance Hall. The lease was signed by Colonel Booth on a hairdressing shop run by the Miss Cross from St. Hilary. The rent was one peppercorn. There is a settle in the present shop dating back to it's religious days. During the War men from the demolition squads were stationed there. Next to Jacob's Coat is the Old Sand House which was a Council owned Yard surrounded by a high wall - where the seat is today. On the West side of The Limes, where the bugalow has been built, was the site of a Water Board shed and next to that Tucker's Yard and stables.

On the present day garage site were three very pretty cottages which were run as a laundry business. The original garage was smaller and was much closer to the main road, it had a lovely large pear tree in the back garden. The garage was owned by Mr Frank Sanders. On the corner, facing the Limes and with the gable end abutting the main road, was Tuckers' China shop. This was a large shop and after it's closure was used as a waste-paper store during the War. The original garage was burnt down when a petrol delivery tanker backed into a brazier - open devil fire - and the garage was burnt down and all the neighbouring properties were evacuated. The garage was rebuilt further back from the road. In between the garage and Filco was a small shed once the site of a chapel.

On the site of the present day Filco - was The Bluebell which was a very small cottage with one front room where the men drank and family ate their meals at the same table it and when floods occurred they would have to sit with their feet in water. Mr and Mrs Fitzgerald ran the Bluebell,. On the side of the Bluebell were nine steps leading down to the river. Adjoining the Bluebell was a butcher, Mr Oakley who killed all his meat on site.

The Disability Shop and the Antique Silver shop was Graham Miles' grocery shop. The business was where the Disability shop is and ther next door house was his home. There were two brother and two sisters all unmarried living there. Bettina's was Mr. Grubb's barber's shop.

Where Martins is today was divided into two :- a large drapers - Le Bon Marche - and a small greengrocers run by Mr and Mrs Batt, before becoming Birds. The Video shop was Mr. Watkins the tailor (one window wide) and next door lived Mrs. Clements The Chinese ~~was~~ The Chinese was The Tuck shop run by Mrs Tilley and before that Mr. Escott had a butcher's shop which had stable doors painted bright blue.

On the North side of the Eastgate

Where the old Post Office stood were two pretty cottages and in today's post office yard was Mrs Stone's sweet shop which did good business on a Sunday when children going to Chapel used half their penny collection on sweets before crossing to Chapel. (The Wesleyan Chapel had a beautiful red wood roof now The Antique Mart). Mrs. Weston's House was a grocers run by Mrs Lewis and known as The Coffee Shop. Anthony Hair care was a shoe repair shop run by Mr Checkers, and Jones' builders was another grocery shop run by Mrs Jenkins. Dr. McGovan lived in Caxton House. Next to No.87, with the Cycling Club disc on the wall, was The Gypsy Tea Rooms, and next door a greengrocery and fish shop - Mr Langford.. Nurse Rimer the midwife lived where the dress shop 87A is today and she had a donkey and cart to go on her rounds.

The Betting shop was a large drapers shop, Jacob's the Drapers, where you could buy a wide range of clothes, materials and hats - they had their own milliners working there. The shop used the central cash system of wires and containers. As you walked into the shop there a wall-sized mirror. During the war the premises were run as a British Restaurant and was used by the school children for their dinners. The present Precinct was a memorial masons yard. The Domus Interior shop was a ladies and gents hairdressers run by Mr and Mrs Stone and Hollwars was a grocers run by Mr Harry Lewis.

The Cinema, built on the site of the tennis courts, held concerts for the troops during the war and the Territorial Army camped in the Ballroom. The Ballroom was destroyed when a large amount of stored celluloid film caught fire. Phil Stud owned the cinema. Two further bad fires recorded were:- one in the Tuck Shop run by Mrs Webb (now Ogmores Vale). There had been a heavy fall of snow and there was no water to put out the fire so an attempt was made using buckets of snow. (Mrs Webb's shop was the limit that the grammar school boarders were allowed to go to to buy their sweets). The Gasworks fire occurred one Sunday afternoon and everyone brought their buckets out to help the fireman, in their brass

helmets, to put out the fire. The Gasworks sold coke and mothers brought their children to sit by the gas holders as it was thought to be a cure for whooping cough.

Lloyds Chemist shop housed a private school run by two old ladies and later Mrs Hill - The Dairy Shop which sold very fine cooked meat. . Lloyds Bank premises was a grocers shop owned by David Williams and managed by Mr Milman, this was opposite The Royal Oak.

Dai John's kitchen shop was a grocers - Thomas & Evans.

The Bridge Studio was Mrs Rustell's fish and chip shop (in the bay window) previously it had been a newsagent belonging to Mr Davis. Mr. and Mrs. Maddocks lived on the east side of the Bridger Studio and he ran the first bus service to Cardiff.

In Westgate Mrs Villis ran the Greyhound Pub in the row of cottages before The Manse, the second one, with Mrs Paine on one side and Mr Burley on the other. Mrs Rustell (not George Rustell's family) ran a pub on the north side at the end of Westgate, right on the pavement, and they had two daughters Daisy and Maud. There was also a private school, the children wore a brown uniform, on the south side before the police station, and this then moved to Llyn Celyn on the north side and run by Irene Morgan.

In Eastgate. Eillen Crowley moved from The Bridge Inn to the middle of the three cottages, on the north side opposite The Old Druids. Mr Shepherd lived on the left side and Mrs Conway on the right. Nurse Roberts lived in The Druids and Mrs Crowley used to be called on to baby sit when Nurse Roberts was called out. By Cinderella's hairdressers there was a water pump right on the pavement. The Davis brothers lived in a cottage, with steps up from the pavement, unfortunately the two brothers quarrelled over a ferret after a rabbiting outing and one shot the other and had to rush to the pump to get water for the wound, which proved fatal. He is now buried on the edge of the north side of the Churchyard. Mr. Sanders' uncle lived opposite. Mr. Marks, a tailor, lived on the south side and Mrs Read did her tailoring apprenticeship with him.

Behind the Town Hall were three cottages with long front garden and a brook behind. They were pulled down to build an air-raid shelter. Mr Morgan, the ice cream man, lived in one. He made and sold his own ice-cream taking it round in a special tricycle cart. He had only one leg. In the second lived Miss Knapton, a dressmaker, and in the third Mr and Mrs Escott (not the same family as the butcher), who were very religious and held services in their cottage and held Christian Endeavour parties.

The Swimming Pool Mrs Read was with a party of schoolchildren in the Pool when the first air-raid siren sounded in Cowbridge. Mr Arnott, who worked in a draper's shop, was an air-raid warden. He rushed to the Pool to get the children to safety. He was very small and was unable to keep up with the children. Mr Arnott was very talented and played the drums in a dance band (piano, piano accordion and drums).

The lamplighter for Cowbridge was Mr Perry who was also the postman. He had a hook hand.

The Bush Inn in Westgate was next to the Nat. Weat Bank and was in a small council house, facing the main road with windows looking out into The Butts.

Mary Wallis 10 April 1999.