



Cleeve Prior Chroniclers

Mary Collins - Recollections of 1937 to 1944

The picture below was taken on the site of Mulberry House (walnut tree top right). The transport business was bought by my father, A.T Brinklow, in 1937-38 from Mr Coldicott [who then lived at the Mill House]. At that time the yard extended to the boundary wall with "Stone Barn", then pigsties, and right back to the building itself of Fir tree cottage, then still 3 small cottages. The business included the transportation of fruit & vegetables from around the Vale of Evesham to Coventry City Cent, and who's widow Stella lived in The Close.



The building now known as Shearwood was leased by 3C from the Miss Holtom's, who lived at the Laurels, and was used as a warehouse for the storage of crates, baskets, etc. The building had previously been housed an egg packing station and an animal feeds business. It was commandeered by the Army at the time of Dunkirk to house homecoming troops.



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Mrs Stella Fletcher did the secretarial work for fathers transport business and lived at the Smithy. Her Maiden name was Roberts, and her father had been village blacksmith until his death in 1929. She told that one of her father's last jobs was to work on the ironwork of the footbridge, which spanned the river from the Mill to the meadows on the far side. The blacksmith before Mr Roberts was a Mr Horne, and at the turn of the century it was a Mr Mathews.

There were several shops in the village, these were:

A small shop at the rear of what is now Squirrel cottage & this was kept by Mr & Mrs Stevens.

A sweet shop in the stone cottage in West End now known as Prior Close

A shop & Post office in the house next to Shearwood

A Grocers Shop, Noakes & Crofts, at the corner of Quarry lane, now Sunnymede, this was used by the army as an office during the war.

Mr & Mrs Stevens also had a shop selling drinks and ice cream by the river at the bottom of Mill Lane.

Mr Gilbert, the cobbler lived & worked at Pear Tree Cottage, and there was a wheelwright business at what is now "A Pile of Stones"

The Mill ceased flour production soon after the 1914/18 war, and in the thirties it was run as a restaurant and tea room. The land behind the mill, now thickly wooded, was an open grassy slope where the crowds from as far away as Coventry and Birmingham gathered at weekends and holidays. The ford and foot bridge gave easy access to the river meadows, and it was a pleasant walk to Salford station. The Mill was used to house troops during the war, it was then left to fall in to disrepair