

## With grateful thanks to Rosemary Parsons for the following information and reminiscences:

Rosemary was born in North Nibley in 1944 & has lived at Hillcrest, Forthay for all her life. This cottage was built in 1910, on the site of a former 'lean to' blacksmiths shop, & Rosemary's maternal grandparents, Mr & Mrs Morris moved there when married in 1911. Rosemary's mother, Gwendoline was born at the cottage & when she married Alfred ('Gaffer') Parsons in 1941 they made their home there with Mrs Morris, who was a widow at this time. Alfred & Gwendoline brought up two children at Forthay, Rosemary & her older brother, Michael born in 1942.

Rosemary has many stories of her parents & grandparents as well as her own memories of growing up in North Nibley in the 1950s & 60s.

*Grandfather Morris was the 'insurance man' & worked for Pearl Insurance. He collected payments from the surrounding villages making his rounds by pony & trap. The trap was kept at Hillcrest but the pony was stabled at Wick so each morning & evening he would have to walk to Wick to collect & then return the pony. In later years he bought a motorbike but had an accident whilst riding it one night, his injuries eventually causing his death when my mum was 16.*

*Grandfather Parsons was killed during the 1<sup>st</sup> World War & his name is on the village war memorial in the cemetery – Percival Parsons. I think I am the only person in the village now who has a relative included on the memorial for World War 1. It was a sad story as my grandfather was allowed home on leave from France to see his new baby son but was killed on returning to the Western Front leaving my grandmother with a baby & a 3 year old – my father, Alfred.*

*Grandmother Parsons (Edith) lived at Rose Cottage, Barrs Lane with her father-in-law (my great grandfather) who helped bring up the children, my dad used to help his grandfather on their smallholding & that was where he got his nickname 'Gaffer'. Rose Cottage was much smaller then, just two rooms up & down with an outside toilet. They got their water from the well by the Black Horse but this would often dry out so in later years, when my dad was married, in the summer he would often take water from the well behind Hillcrest to Rose Cottage. Edith was a dressmaker & she used to make me lots of clothes with her offcuts & from parachute & black out material after World War II.*

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*My mum & dad both attended the village school but dad had first attended the school in the upper room at the Chapel which cost 2d a week. Mum had cookery lessons at Nibley House whilst she was at Nibley School & as a schoolboy, Dad went to the Tyndale Institute for woodwork lessons.*

*They were married in 1941 at St Martin's where Grandmother Morris worshipped but as Grandmother Parsons was a strong member of the Chapel the church ceremony was followed by another at the Chapel & then the reception including a wartime cake decorated with a type of butter icing, not royal icing, as sugar was rationed.*

*Both myself & my brother were born at home. Dr Dawes from Wotton attended the births as did Nurse Warner who delivered most village babies at that time. Mum had to go the Baby Clinic in Wotton so used to put us both in the pram & then walk there & back.*

*We both went to Nibley School but I left when I was 8 to go the new school at Woodfields where I was much happier & then I passed the 11 plus so caught the bus to Katherine Lady Berkeleys which was right in Wotton then.*

*There was both a Cub Pack, run by Joy Moon (now Joy Jellings) & a Scout Troop (run by Brian Chapel from Wotton) in Nibley when we were children & Michael went to both. The Scout Hut was behind Cotswold House at Pittcourt where we used to go to beetle & whist drives & lots of other fundraising events.*

*Dad was treasurer of the Chapel from the age of 15 until he died so on Sunday I went to Chapel in the morning, Sunday School at the Chapel in the afternoon & back again to the evening service. There was a much larger congregation in the 1950's & 60's. The minister was Mr Williams who came from Neath in South Wales & visited us once a month.*

*When we were growing up there was a road sweeper in the village, Mr Preston who cleaned all the lanes in Nibley & especially when there was snow. Mr Freeman from Wickwar sold clothes, curtains & bed linen door to door. 'Nanny' Smith from Waterley Bottom used to lay out those who had passed away. Roly Elliott, who lived in the row of cottages opposite the garage, was the cobbler but he also wound the church clock every day.*