



What was it like?

Local voices and memories

Mike Harding



Alec Bull

We arrived at the farm and lived on Garboldisham Ling. I was to be one of six cowmen for a hundred cows, nowadays there's one cowman looking after three, four, or five hundred cows, and all the rest is done automatically.

LOHP volunteers made recordings in 2012-3 of some local people's memories.

Here are some short extracts chosen by James Baillie.

The photos are by Mike Harding.

Do you know anyone who has lived here a long time?

Ask them what they remember.

Write your own memories on the last page....



Local voices and memories



Mike Harding

Brian and Kim Lambert

The fish we used to catch years ago [at Scarfe Meadows], there were roach, dace, gudgeon, pike, sticklebacks, eels – there were a lot of eels down there – it was good for fishing. This was before 1968, when they straightened the river out. After straightening it out, the fish went into decline, and there's next to nothing down there now.



Local voices and memories



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David Orr

Blackberries, of course – that was a traditional thing. But you didn't go and pick from Mrs So-and-so's hedges; not that they were her hedges of course, but they were where she got her blackberries, enough to make the jam that she needed.

People used to pick blackberries and take them to the village shop, where they'd be sent to the jam factories down in Essex.



Local voices and memories



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Doug Atkins

Broomscot Common was reasonably open, and we were able to set up goalposts at the southern end of it, but it was pretty rough, with rabbit holes and moles mainly.

I would've said at the time – late fifties – I don't remember a great deal of gorse on the area. There could've been some low-lying heather maybe, there may have been small patches of gorse but I don't remember that there was a great deal of it.



Local voices and memories



Mike Harding

Malcolm Baker

We used to go shooting on the tenth of May, every year. We'd shoot the young crows, cut the breasts off, and it'd make a lovely pie.

We used to collect the cobnuts out of the woods at the back of the farm. Also in the war, during the war years, we used to collect blackberries and take them to a lady at Lopham who used to buy them off us, for a bit of pocket money.



Local voices and memories



Mike Harding

Leslie Flatman

There were rabbits about, more of them than we get about now. A lot of rabbits about – they were the main dinner at harvest time.

When harvesting, you'd catch a rabbit out of the cornfields, then take it home and see if you can eat it!



Local voices and memories



Mike Harding

Mervyn Cater

My Mum said to me that if you watch people – what they bring out of their dinner bag – you can tell just how well the family are doing. So I started to take notice, and she was right. Just after Christmas everyone had got goose-grease to go on their bread, and no cheese, but as January turned in, they'd have an onion, and dry bread. Then it'd get even worse, just a red beet; no eggs, not until the spring.



Local voices and memories



Mike Harding

Roly Farr

After the harvest - a gyrotiller came to do these fields then - to break them up. That was a great machine - with two things - great iron shears - turning at the back. They used to work all night. There was a gang of men, and they had an old hut to live in.

I know when I was a boy they used to throw those shears, when they were worn up, onto the borders and banks, and I used to go round and collect them up and we'd sell them for scrap iron.



Can you find the answers?

1. Where did David Orr not pick blackberries? Why?
2. What made the fish disappear from the river at Scarfe Meadows? (B&K L)
3. How many other cowmen worked on the farm when Alec Bull first started there? (AB)
4. What two ways did children make a bit of money? (RF and MB)
5. What was in the packed lunches of some workers in January? (MC)
6. What was for dinner at harvest time? (LF)
7. Where did the children play football? (DA)
8. What did they do with the crows they shot? (MB)



Little Ouse
Headwaters Project
www.lohp.org.uk



My story

My picture

What story or memory would you like to tell about Broomscot Common?

What story or memory would you like to tell about Scarfe Meadows?

What story or memory would you like to tell about any other LOHP sites?