

## MEMORIES OF RICHARD OGDEN

*Richard contacted Spotlight recently to ask to be removed from the mailing list. He has kindly, however, signed off with some very interesting memories of Sarratt.*

It is now over 40 years since I lived in Sarratt, and over 10 years since my mother, Joyce Ogden (née Fulluck) died, her own direct contact with the village having been gradually diminishing in the years up to then, and I think it is now time that I ceased taking the Sarratt Spotlight. Although I recognise some of the names mentioned, and am interested and pleased to see the village still thriving, I really think it is no longer necessary to keep this link.

Of course I have, and will always retain what I know of the village's past and my own family's past there. I know that my great grandfather was a wheelwright next to "The Cricketers" (cartwheels were rolled into the pond to cool the metal tyres). My grandfather, however, worked for a baker, first in Sarratt and later in Chorleywood. He met my grandmother when delivering bread to Sarratt Mill House – she came from a village near Bedford and was in service with the Duchess of Bedford, who apparently had the Mill House as a sort of holiday house, and brought her staff with her when staying! [This Duchess late in life learnt to fly, making flights to Karachi and Cape Town, dying in 1937 by crashing into the North Sea.]

My grandparents lived in Myrtle Cottages – still there next to the school – through WWI (grandfather was medically unfit for military service), but soon after the landlord refused to provide wallpaper which my grandfather would have put up. So they had the first house in Church Lane (between the Green and Church End) built - now no 62. My mother was never afterwards seen playing with other children - she was too busy helping with the paying guests and chickens who helped finance a big venture.

My mother, having obtained good secretarial qualifications, cycled to work in Watford during WWII with Doris Barbero – welcome company in dangerous times, but she was surprised to be asked to be Doris's bridesmaid when she married the optician she worked for - but the best man, the optician's brother, became my father.

They also had a house built in Church Lane – no 58 – and I came along a few years later. I am told that I came home from my first *morning* at school, complaining that they hadn't yet taught me to read! "They" soon rectified the omission - at least, I have no recollection of ever having any difficulty with reading! And I remember being one of the first pupils to move into the first part of the new school (whilst some still remained in the old building at the top of Church Lane - for quite a time, I think - certainly until I had gone on to Ricky Grammar).

So I think it is time to stop reading the "Spotlight", whilst taking this opportunity to wish the village well and still keeping a more than interested eye on it "as and when".