

Memories of my grandfather,

Ernest Cheeseman

(a former 'father of the village')

by his granddaughter Brenda Field

We were delighted to hear from Brenda Field (nee Richardson) whose grandfather lived in West Farleigh from 1917 to 1972. Here is her story:

My grandparents, on my maternal side, were Ernest and Susan Cheeseman. They lived in the village from 1917 until 1972 when he died. They moved here on medical grounds following the death of their first child, Dorothy. I have no knowledge of what occupation grandfather had prior to moving to the village, but understand that he took over the tenancy of the Good Intent in Charlton Lane. At some time he bought a green-grocers business in Bevendean, Brighton, where I was born in 1933. My parents were resident there managing the business until the war started when we moved and one of his sons, Cecil, took it over.

By that time, grandfather had moved from the Good Intent and was living at The Thatched House. Due to my grandmother being in poor health following raising a large family (4 girls, 3 of who survived and 5 boys) they had a housekeeper, Lil, who lived-in. I can remember going around the village with Lil selling savings stamps in aid of the war effort. I stayed with my sister at The Thatched House for a while as my mother was in Norfolk where my father was stationed on an American Air Force base.

On a patch of ground opposite the house, grandfather kept chickens and I can remember men from the Egg Marketing Board coming to collect eggs, and he also owned a cherry orchard in the vicinity. I remember that my mother was picking cherries and my sister and I were on our bicycles and a dog fight took place overhead and we were picking up the shell cases.

On the photo of The Thatched House, which is of the wedding of the daughter Beryl, taken in the 1930s, Ernest and Susan are on the far right with two other daughters Kathleen (my mother) and Joyce. The extension to the right of the house was built by my father. We also have a newspaper cutting of the wedding of Joyce taken in the grounds in 1939. My mother and her brother Claude had a double wedding presumably in the village about 1925.



I do not know when grandfather sold The Thatched House to film stars John Clements and Kay Hammond, but he then moved to Burnea in Ewell Lane. Here he has a small holding of a few acres, and he ran his plastering business from there with two of his sons. One son, Peter, ran the smallholding. He built a pair of houses just below the now Tickled Trout where two of the sons lived.

Following the death of grandmother, my mother went and stayed at Burnea to look after grandfather and the ailing housekeeper, and when she died, mother looked after grandfather until he died in 1972:



Ernest and Susan Cheeseman

As the Parish Magazine for February 1972 states, grandfather was involved in many aspects of village life for many years eg the Parish Council, the Church and Sports Club.

Having been around the village on Google Earth, we see that the Good Intent has changed drastically from the enclosed photo. And the bungalow at Burnea has been demolished, the Oast houses renovated and a tarmacking business is in the yard.

The youngest son, Peter, was in the Royal Marines and moved to New Zealand and I think he is still there.

Brenda Field (nee Richardson)

NB: Brenda also remembers Mrs Underdown, Tom Underdown, Mrs Basil Taylor, and Mr Reed-Marr

Do you remember Brenda or her family? Have you got a story to tell about West Farleigh? What are your memories of life in the village? We would love to hear from you.

Please contact Jacky Taylor (editor@farleighevents.com) or 01622 236421