

## Recollections of Cotgrave by Dorothy Albans

On the main road, opposite the old library there was a dyke called butt dyke. It used to take all the water to the canal and to the river Trent. Also, on Morkinshire lane there was a village midwife. Her name was Nurse Seal.

Mr Beaumont's father and his grandfather were both butchers. Mr Brumpton was the other village butcher and Mr Barlow from Cropwell Bishop came around each week in his van selling his meat. Mr Branston's baker's van, driven by Tony Howitt, also came round selling bread and lovely cakes.

Opposite the Methodist Chapel on Bingham Road, Miss Adams opened her Sedora Kennels in 1956. She bred Spaniel dogs. Going back to Mr and Mrs Mitchell's paper shop, Mrs Mitchell had a very tiny section at the end of the shop where she had a wool shop. It was really difficult to see her because of the amount of wool she kept in the shop. The scout and guide hall up, Chapel Yard was used on Saturday nights as a cinema. It was the Parish Hall and was used for most of the village functions — weddings, receptions, etc. There were a lot of cottages and houses between the Mitchell's house and the Hall. Nearly all these village cottages were demolished in 1964.

Back to Candleby Lane, the Vet's small building, which was even smaller then, was the Doctor's surgery around 1963. Patients queued up outside, whatever the weather and, once inside, nothing was confidential — the conversations between doctors and patients could be heard by others in the very small waiting room. Previously, the doctors travelled to Cotgrave from Radcliffe-on-Trent.

The ground where the Catholic Church is now was then a garage and a bus service. Lewis's buses ran from there. It cost threepence in old money to travel to Nottingham. Candleby Lane finished where the school drive is now — beyond that was a cart track, leading to the fields and woods where now stands the estate which housed the miners when they moved down from the North.

Back to Risegate, so named, I'm told, because of the gate which was the access to the road and was lifted to let people pass. There was a big transport yard there called Albans' Transport. There was also a magnificent bowling green on part of the ground owned by Mrs Smart, which is now Walnut Grove. Entrance to the bowling green was on Risegate. Next to this used to be a very ornate Gypsy caravan owned by Mr Hopkins, who, in winter, lived in the town and spent his summers in this van. The Manor House on the corner of Risegate and Owthorpe Road was once a monastery and was said to be haunted. Also, there are two underground tunnels, one leading from underneath the Manor House and emerging at Devil's Drop, at the top of Owthorpe Hill and the other from under the Churchyard on Church Lane, then called Pepper Street, emerging under the Post Office.

Owthorpe Road was then called The Grippe, on the left hand side of which were mainly fields, leading up to Wolds Hill at the top of Owthorpe Road. At the top of this hill was Top Wood which was re-named Devil's Drop. In this area of woodland violets grew in abundance. On the right hand side of Owthorpe Road stood a row of about twenty cottages, again demolished in 1964. These cottages had no water taps at all — water was delivered there each week by a lorry. Toilets were at the bottom of the garden and consisted of a wooden seat with a pan underneath which was emptied by a lorry once a week, just as dustbins are today. There were no bathrooms, just a tin bath on the hearth in front of the fire. Set back beyond these cottages was the brickyard, the cliff face of which the soldiers used as a firing range. Lower down the road was a large area of allotment gardens.

On to Scrimshire Lane which was called then Scrimshaw lane. There was a row of cottages which belongs now to the B & B that was previously the picture-framing shop. These cottages were demolished in 1963. We were able to play in the road when we were children, even on Scrimshire Lane, because there were hardly any cars. When I was young, I collected our milk each day, after school, in a small can with a lid, from Wood's Farm on Plumtree Road and we often used to see a herd of cows being led through the village. I collected eggs from Mr Cox's Farm on the corner of Scrimshire Lane, now called Goosegate.

Back to Plumtree Road, now — and the one village school. Everyone stayed there until they were fifteen years old when they went to work — unless they passed their 'eleven-plus'. Then, in 1955, children of eleven years age and upwards were transported by bus to Dayncourt School in Radcliffe-on-Trent. In Cotgrave Church School there were only three teachers. The headmaster was Mr Atkin, the two others were Miss Taylor and Miss Fox (later to become Mrs Kitchen). Nature walks were a treat to be looked forward to most weeks. Everyone at the school had to sit at their desk all the time and chatting was not allowed.

Miss Wilson was the Girl Guide leader and lived up Hollygate Lane in the big house which now belongs to the owner of Colwick greyhound stadium.

On to Plumtree Road, there was a market garden, owned by Mr Falkner, just after Mensing Avenue. Mrs Hall, who was previously Miss Smith, owned land from Broadmeer up as far as the Dial. Her house was on the opposite side of The Gripes (Owthorpe Road), a bungalow called The Warren. This has now been demolished - and she owned the land either side of The Warren, from Pear Tree House, which is near the Ringleas entrance, to Saxon Way. Mrs Hall was one of the owners of William Dixon's clothing factory who made school uniforms.

Now back to Main Road, I omitted to say that the marl pit is on the left which backs up to Mill Hill. This marl pit contained marl which was distributed all over the world, as far away as Australia.