

## Betty Kennedy

*For this story we go over the bridge to Little Shelford, where Betty was born in the 1920s and lived, first with her parents, and then husband Robert, for many years. In later life she moved to Great Shelford and now lives in Cambridge Rd. She describes an idyllic childhood, and a moving wartime experience.*



*Betty Kennedy*

As you go over the bridge our house was the one back from the road on the left-hand side, with great decorative chimneys and clock tower.<sup>1</sup> There were five children - Margaret, Jean, Douglas, myself, and my younger sister Mary. Daddy was chauffeur/head-gardener to Mrs Eaden (a descendant of the Wale family). She lived in the Hall. One night my father called us all into their bedroom because the Hall was on fire. Our house being so close, the firemen had to keep turning the hosepipes on to the corner of our house. For me, a vivid first memory! After the Hall burned down, they didn't rebuild it, but they did build an extension on the lodge, right on the corner.

The estate took in all the fields at the back and down to the river (after the war it was given to the village). We used to go swimming there. Going up river, the Great Shelford river went through the Mill (Pearce's, that is), to turn the mill wheels. When the sluice gates were opened, the rush of water caused a large deep pool, where we had changing huts and a diving board.

There were several gardeners on the estate. The house also had stables underneath and a huge hay loft above, next to our bedrooms. There were usually about six horses, owned by the Pares Wilsons from the Manor House on the opposite side of the road, who rented the stables. They did a lot of fox hunting. One time the fox ran into our kitchen door, so Mary and I shut the door and let him out of the front door, the opposite side of the house, where the fox escaped before the hounds



*Manor Cottage chimneys now*

<sup>1</sup> Betty lived on the Wale estate.