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Dorothy Bond nee Thrussell

Barkway memories from the time of the First World War from an interview with Dorothy Bond nee Thrussell in 2002. Born 1911, died 2006.

Spelling and arithmetic were the most important items in Barkway school. As we got older, Friday afternoons were for handiwork. The girls used to do sewing, and the boys used to do cane. They were allowed to redo cane chairs for people in the village, and they made boxes – egg boxes and various things which were sold. The thing about these activities was that some money was made and went towards us going on outings.

Mr Pryce the headmaster died in 1915, and Mrs Pledger took over later as head teacher. The room now used as a canteen was always used as a classroom. That was divided so we had three classrooms. Art was indoors.

One thing that was encouraged although we had a headmistress, was sport – girls and boys. We played cricket and having no field we borrowed the one down Burrs Lane, and we used to go down there, with mixed teams. And of course, we had visiting teams. Barley and Buckland used to play. Mrs Pledger said that when you play think of the honour of your school – doesn't matter if you lose.

Children came from other villages, and there were groups of 4 or 5. Mrs Pledger was a very good singer, and if you couldn't sing when you came, you could when you left. I suppose I was about 10, when we had a wonderful harmonium, and I remember it with prayers. We used to have prayers every morning. I used to play the harmonium for hymns once a week. The vicar always came and read the lesson. That was Reverend Stubbs then. At Christmas we had a parcel of 30 knitted dolls. Mrs Pledger's son Godfrey and I were good singers, and when the inspector came, we were always disappointed not to sing.

We lived at number 74 High Street, right up till my youngest brother Frank was born. My eldest brother Stan worked away, and my sisters Gwen and Mabel had jobs. When Frank was born there were only Edna and Jack at home as well. In 1918 when I was 8, we moved to the Chaise and Pair. It was 5 shillings a week rent, and that's all my father as landlord paid.