

# **DERSINGHAM 2000 HISTORY PROJECT**

## **INTERVIEW 22**

**Date interview conducted:** 23rd September 1999  
**Name:** Charles Alfred Reynolds

### **When did you first come to Dersingham?**

I was born at Dersingham at Roseneath, Post Office Road Dersingham. I now live at 28 Post Office Road.

### **Do other members of your family live in Dersingham?**

I have a cousin, Derek Reynolds, who still lives in the village.

### **What are your earliest memories of the village?**

My earliest memories of the village are from living with my father in his house at Roseneath, working in the nursery gardens in which we grew all sorts of plants imported from Holland; azaleas, daffodils and whatnot in the season. Also when I was in the village I worked at Stanton's farm as a "Hold Ye" boy leading horses, carrying the shoves of hay, or even wheat stacks. Getting on the stacks and preparing the building of stacks.

I was born 24th September 1924.

*How old were you when you worked for Mr. D. Stanton?*

I was about 9 years old. My father had horses but he had a business growing the greengrocers, taking it to King's Lynn Market. We used to take that for two days a week from there in open cart. I used to sit on the cart with a sack over my head in bad weather. He also had shops at King's Lynn, at Hunstanton sorry, which he put his sisters in and this was at Hunsta'n High Street which they all own the properties there. We used to have to go up there as well.

*Could you go back to your granddad?*

Granddad wasn't here very long. He died and left Grandma and Grandma lived in the corner house; she had a sweet shop there on the corner of Post Office Road and Chapel Road right opposite my bungalow. It was the old family house; that was where my granddad lived. Then he moved to Roseneath. Which was built, I think, somewhere after the war, 1920. My father built that somewhere when he got married. He must have been married before then 'cos I was born in 1924. I don't know the exact date he had that built.

My dad grew vegetables, he was a horticulturist. Granddad was a nursery man as well. He used to grow all flowers for sale. He grew tomatoes, cucumbers. The photograph of the long greenhouse which was 400 feet by 300 feet was where he used to grow somewhere about 4000 cucumbers. It used to stand back from the road, connected from the house to the existing one where he had a house built. He had the land at Mill Road which we still own; at the top, we still own land there. It's now let to a tenant farmer. He used to grow on there as well, which is somewhere about three and a half acres of land; Mill House is just above it. He also had a nursery doing bedding plants all through the season.

There was me and my brother; he was 4 years older. After mother died, when I was six, we had various housekeepers. They didn't last very long unfortunately. We all had to make the best of a bad job. I used to have to cook breakfast when I was six or seven. The men used to come and sit in the kitchen with the long table. Before they started work and we used to prepare the breakfast. Through the years my brother he went to King Edward's school; he won a scholarship. What happened they withdrew the scholarship and the bus fares and I passed the scholarship but my father couldn't afford to pay to go on the bus. What I used to do - harvest to get the money to pay for me education; I used to sometimes bike in the fine weather, I have walked from Dersingham to King Edward's school. I remember one Christmas we got to Babingley Bridge and someone in a car came up, it was snowing, a chap called Gerry Riches, a car pulled up and my father told me not to take a lift and we refused to go with him. In the end things got better and I was able to go on the bus.

The men used to start work at five or six in the morning so there was no hard feelings. I suppose we used to start off about six and get there for nine. I think we used to leave about half-past four and then come back. We used to walk in the dark; it wasn't easy times, far from it.

I remember my mother 'cos what happened father used to have horses and he put me uncle in the coal business which went down the coal-yard at Dersingham and he used to have high carts. He used to get the coal, undo the flap on the door and push it from the trucks into the carts. This was the coal that came into Dersingham Station. What happened he bought this horse, which I understand was a circus horse, what happened was this thing when it got loaded in this high cart it got on its high heels and tipped it out. He put it in the paddock behind the house and my mother went out there top look at it. She went to stroke it and unfortunately it went up on its hind legs and hit her one. She got taken ill and she died from Pneumonia, I don't know exactly.

Every summer we used to be put on the train to me uncle at Croydon for holidays 'cos my father was working all the time. We get in the train at Dersingham and go all the way to Liverpool Street. He was friend Martin, lived at Double Lodges; he walked from Double Lodges and set up a greengrocery business in Croydon. He walks all there and set up first with a barrow. Then he had a horse and cart, finished up with three lorries. I used to deliver stuff for him when I was a lot older.

### **INCOMPLETE ORIGINAL TRANSCRIPTION**