

EASY TOPIC REFERENCE – THE WEST QUARTER OF EXETER

BACKGROUND

The West Quarter of Exeter is historically the industrial quarter of Exeter. From the 17th Century when Exeter was a major manufacturer and exporter of woollen cloth right through to WWII, the main factories, breweries, tanneries and mills were sited there, close to the River. Because of this the cheapest housing in the City was also there. Until the major slum clearances of the 1930's the streets of the West Quarter were cobbled with an open drain running down the centre. The houses were mostly late Medieval timber framed houses, tall and thin (like the 'house that moved') arranged around a courtyard where the shared toilets and water standpipe were. Around 1850 some Victorian clearances took place and tall, austere purpose built tenements (with inside toilets!) were built at the top of Coombe Street. Throughout its history the West Quarter of Exeter is the region that received the poorest immigrants, notably in the 1840's and 1850's Irish peasant's fleeing the poverty of the Potato Famine.

The streets were bustling and busy and everyone knew each other. There were communal washhouses for washing clothes and bathing. The smells from the factories were rich to say the least and rats were a big problem. There were several pubs, all well frequented and the police would only patrol the region in pairs. In spite of all this, the people who lived there between the wars have fond memories. They all relate tales of kindness, closeness and fun. It seems there was a real community spirit.

CONTENTS

1. BAKERS
2. BAWDINESS
3. BENEFACTORS
 - FARTHING BREAKFAST*
4. CHARACTERS
 - ARTFUL THOMAS*
 - TAFFY FULFORD*
 - TOMMY SHILSTON*
 - FRENCH ONION MEN*
 - OTHERS*
5. CHILDREN
6. CHURCH/SUNDAY SCHOOL
7. EVENTS
 - BARREL OF PORT*
 - CRICKLEPIT MILL FIRE*
8. FACTORIES/WORK
9. FOOD
10. HOUSING
11. HEALTH
 - DIPHTHERIA & SCARLETT FEVER*
 - INFANT MORTALITY*
12. POLICE
13. POVERTY
 - PAWN SHOPS*
 - POACHING*
 - RENT*
14. PUBS
15. RATS
16. RIVER
 - REGATTA*
 - BOATING*
17. SCHOOLS
18. SHOPS
19. WASH HOUSES
20. THE WARS

ALPHABETICAL REFERENCE TO TRANSCRIPTS

1. BAKERS

(para. 15) When we were kids in Preston St, I always remember Easter. I used to get out of bed and put a coat on, nip across the road to Whites, the baker and get hot-cross buns, straight from the oven. Of course, by that time, Dad had made a cup of tea. They were really hot-cross buns.

(para. 13) You used to take your roast dinner to the bakers to be cooked. And they did it up Preston St. in Berrys.

(para. 21) Sundays, the bakers was closed and you could put your meal up and they would put it in the oven.

(para. 18) I used to have a flat up over Chanters the baker. Everytime I went to the toilet I could smell doughnuts. I got sick of it in the end.

2. BAWDINESS

(para. 13) There was a family called Glanville who lived in Mermaid's Yard. Mabel she was called, she was a character, she lived in a tenement house. She stuttered. I walked in one day and she was stood in front on the range dressing, she had one leg in her drawers and one leg out. I said, oh sorry Mabel, but of course because she stuttered so she was just stood there for ages like that trying to tell me it was alright.

(para. 14) Not very far from there, opposite the old mortuary, in Bowdens Place. Just after the war there was a little old lady who lived in one room. A lovely little old lady, an Irishwoman. She used to wear a long black dress and lace up boots. Up over there was an Irishman with a droopy moustache. He was a dirty bugger, he never looked as if he washed himself. I walked in there one day. Now this is just the truth, she was 85 and he must have been nearly 90. They had an old chair in the corner and he had her laid over the top of him. He was going for it and there was about 180 years between 'em. I shall never forget that as long as I live.

BENEFACTORS

(para. 10) We went on an outing from Albert Place, to Mamhead. Sir Robert Newman, who was a local benefactor. He had a lovely place at Mamhead. We went by 'charabanc'. It was all green grass. He came out to speak to us. He said to my Mum 'how old are you' and she said '44 and never been kissed'.

(para. 17) Mrs Tinkham was a benefactress, she had a little shop and people could go there for credit.

(para. 1) The Vicar of the Parish of St Mary Major had money left him so everyone in St Mary Major had a hundred weight of coal given to them. And that went on for years and years.

(para. 4) . My mother's friend used to live above Chanter's the bakers and she said to my mother that they wanted to give her free dinners, down the Mission Hall, but she said she didn't want them, she said 'send Rosie down from school and she can have me dinner'. It was a lovely dinner, it was beautiful. Roast, cottage pie, stews in the winter, all for a penny. She was a good cook whoever she was.

(para. 18) I also remember the soup kitchens at the lower market. We used to go up there and queue up.

FARTHING BREAKFAST

(para. 16) At the farthing breakfast you could have bread and jam as well, but you had to bloody move for that. And we had cocoa to drink in a metal mug.

(para. 4) Our Mum didn't want us to go down to the farthing breakfast but we begged and begged until she let us go one day. I sat opposite this boy, and he always had a dirty nose, he put me off my breakfast, I didn't go back again.

(para 17) Where the Rack St School was, the Farthing Breakfast was on the other side. It was a big shed place and in the mornings you could go down there and they'd give you a cup of cocoa and bread of some description.

(para. 23) The Farthing breakfast was down Cricklepit, before that it was at Exe Island but I don't remember that it was before my time. Anyway there was an inscription up over the door there which was:-

*"A farthing, of all coins the least
turns a fast into a feast"*

(para. 4) The Farthing breakfast was down the Mission Hall. It was lovely, you had this big bun, with jam and a cup of cocoa.

4. CHARACTERS

ARTFUL THOMAS

(para. 12) Artful Thomas, he might have lived in Preston Street. He used to look up until the sky until the crowd had gathered around him, but of course there was nothing there.

(para. 8) Somebody said Artful Thomas lived in these cottages. He said that Artful Thomas had taught him fishing. He said that Artful Thomas was a lovely man, he spent hours with him, teaching him to fish.

(para. 10) Artful Thomas committed suicide. He had 21 kids. He used to go around with collection boxes but he was fiddling the money.

TAFFY FULFORD

(para. 15) Then of course there was Taffy Fulford who used to go around the streets of Exeter with an old pony and cart collecting jam jars. He could call "plates, cups and saucers", and the kids would bring him out jam jars and he would give them sweets. I think he got the sweets from manufacturers near Preston St. Of course, what the kids would do, as one was up front giving him a jam jar the others would be at the back nicking the sweets. He hanged himself in the end.

(para. 7) I remember Taffy Fulford, he went around with the sweets for jam jars. But the sweets was full of mice turds. We didn't know what they were so we used to eat it.

TOMMY SHILSTON

(para. 13) In the 1930's they used to have a carnival that formed up in Buddle Lane. Old Tommy Shilston used to lead the procession through the West Quarter on a horse with a live fox.

Also check Weeks.

FRENCH ONION MEN

(para. 16) The French onion men used to sleep rough in the wharf warehouses. They had no internal stairs in those days. One family came here year after year. They made no money towards the end, they just kept coming back to see old friends. The old man 'Jean' who used to organise it stayed with the Dorothy's in the pub, but the others slept rough in the wharf.

(para. 7) We used to watch the boats come in with the French onions. When you bought some off of them, they always used to say 'and a penny for myself?' They used to live in the warehouse while they were here.

para. 4) Further down on the quay we used to watch the French boats come in with all the onions. They off loaded outside the Fountain Inn (now the Prospect) into the stores that they used in the Onedin Line.

OTHERS

(para. 27) I remember old *Joey Winfield*, he was a chimney sweep, he was a little chap. A bit of a character but he was alright. There was another one, *Chinny Diamond*, if the police was after him he would run across the rooftops and that. They didn't welcome the police but in the main they was law-abiding people.

(para. 20) What about *old Slabda*. He was an old man, lived down the on Quay and for a bit of bread he would sing 'Slabda on the water, slabda on the sea, slabda, slabda everywhere'. We used to rub the bread on the floor but he'd still eat it.

para, 10) Down the bottom of West St. visitors would stop and look at the Matthew the Miller clock and if you stopped and told them about it they would give you a ha'penny. But there was an old man called *Jack Davey*, and old man with a stick, he lived in Stepnote. Well he loved to be down there so that he would get the tip. If we went down he used to shout at us. He used to sit on the church steps there.

5. CHILDREN

(para. 7) There were quite a few children down there. We used to play on this playground but other than that we played our games outside Bodleys foundry in the road. Then you could to up the shop at the bottom of Quay Hill and buy 'tops and whips'. A penny for a whip or top. We had iron hoops, off down the road with an iron hoop. You made your own fun.

(para. 10) With this tuppence I would go with a couple of mates either to *Mrs Form* who had a shop in Quay Hill or to the little sweet shop at the bottom of Quay Lane. Ha'peth of Tuckers chocolate moulded caramels, five or a ha'peth or five Bobby Dazzler caramels or two farthing everlasting strips or a sherbet dab. Tuppence was a lot of money.

(para 30.) We used to play slides down the gutter in Stepcote Hill. It was all cobbly down that way.

(para. 14) Between the two rows of houses, there were cobbles, with a central drain. We used to play on the cobbles. Up the top of the yard there was a nice big space and the girls would go up skipping.

(para. 12) The Bishop's Palace ground was open to youngsters on Saturday mornings but you had to pay a ha'penny to go in. They would give you a drink and a sandwich or something like that and you could play on the grass. But we found a way, there was an underground passage that would go from under the walls up to the Palace ground and get in without paying.

(para. 2) As youngsters we would think nothing of going in and out of eachothers houses. I can remember, we was very poor in themdays. If we was a little bit tight, we would think nothing of going into somebodys house for bread and dripping.

(para. 1) I used to find it very nice there, and as kids growing up you always felt safe to go out and play. You'd go out and stay out until after dark with no fear.

(para. 22) There were courtyards in Rack St. The Newcombes at the top used to have a little roundabout. They got upset one day because someone was putting French coins in and get a free ride. It was us, Dad had brought them home from the war.

(r para. 5) When we were kids we used to go down to the old water wheel to catch eels. We used to get a cotton reel, and go down the the ballast heap, pick up the turfs and collect hundreds of worms, sew them into a bunch and dangle it under the wheel and catch the eels. That was called 'clatting'.

6. CHURCH/SUNDAY SCHOOL

(para. 1) I went to Sunday School in the Ewings Lane Sunday School - Chapel. Ewings Lane ran from St Edmunds Street down to the courtyard behind the Bishop's Blaize pub which is still there.

(para. 4) The Sunday School I used to go to in Ewings Lane was closed and moved to Exe Island, to the Mission House. The building is still there near the arch under the by-pass. There used to be a dosshouse there.

(para. 19) You never travelled very much in those days but we had to go Sunday School down Ewings Lane. When you attended they stamped your card. If you didn't have enough stamps you couldn't go on the trip to Dawlish Warren. They had one little tea house there. There was nothing else. We had to get water from the Station. We sat at trestle tables under a cover like down on the Quay fish market.

(para. 15) It was Christmas, I was 11 and I walked to up the Tabernacle, the old church called the Riverside church now. I didn't usually go there, I shouldn't have been there really, but when the lady saw me she gave me a present. I ran all the way home with it and me and my brothers opened it and it was a Magic Lantern. I ran all the way home because I knew I wasn't supposed to have it really.

7. EVENTS

BARREL OF PORT

(paras. 10 & 11) Where Tiffany's is now, that used to be a bonded warehouse. One day they were offloading the barrels of port. They off-loaded one massive great barrel and it rolled, and it rolled over the edge of the water and sank. It was so big and unwieldy that they couldn't get it out. We were told that they were going to get a diver the next morning to bring the barrel up. Anyway, late in the evening I remember my mum saying 'look, I want you to go down to the shed and see so and so and he will give you some drink for your Dad' and she gives me a little enamel guzzunder. So I goes nipping down, course there's loads of kids, all going down there with saucepans, glass jars and the like. When we got down there, we had to line up and we'd get a measure of port. We were told we musn't say anything to anybody. I gave it to Mum, Mum give it to Dad, Dad drank it. Later we were told that people had gone in and got this barrel out themselves late in the day. Everything went, even the wood from the barrel was chopped up for fires. My older brother told me that even the rings from the barrels was taken to Parkin's and melted down. Of course the police went down there investigating, but nobody knew anything.

The diver was down there for quite a long time! They thought it might of rolled into the middle of the river. It couldn't go far because of the weir.

CRICKLEPIT MILL FIRE

(para. 15) We had a fire down at Cricklepit Mill, we lived opposite. There was so much heat coming off the houses that we had to go up Rack Street to my Grannies.

(para. 22) The Mill caught fire at one time and I remember my mother being afraid that it would spread into Preston St. She took us down the passage so that should anything happen we could run straight out.

(para. 18) In the West Quarter was a big flour mill and there was a terrible fire one night and we stood at the bottom of Preston St watching, because Granny's house was only two up from the bottom. All the firemen were there in their brass helmets. Why I remember it, was the men were leading the horses out, and he came out with two horses and stopped right in front of us. He asked my Mum, 'where can we take the horses' and my Mum told him to go up Coombe St because there were some stables up there.

8. FACTORIES/WORK

(para. 8) My fathers parents lived in Cowick Road and he worked a Bradbears the brushmakers. Grandmother was confined to bed. He was a wonderful old fellow. In those days my father, who was a labourer, could be unemployed for 2 or 3 years at a time, not through any fault of his own. Mother used to do grandmother 's washing once a week. One of my sister's and I would do down and pick up the washing, bring it back, mother would wash it, I would work the mangle, mother would get out the old flat-iron, warm it up and do the ironing and then take it back again. One and six a week that was. There was no family allowance in those days and the Means Test was on then.

(para. 10) Uncle George worked over at Gabrials and every Friday he would bring his wage packet home, unopened. People always brought their wage packets home sealed. He would open it there and give me tuppence.

(para. 3) When we looked out our bedroom window, there was Pearce rag stores, with all the rabbit skins hanging in the window. If I had a stick I could have poked them, but there was no smell.

(para. 20) Her brother worked for Pearces the rag and bone people. They lived down the Quarter itself - West Street. There were several houses along there near Pearces. I can see it now. You could take a rabbit down and they would buy it for a couple of coppers.

(para. 9) My mother worked for Loyes tobacco before I was born. She was a 'stripper'. She used to strip the leaves.

(para. 4) There used to be a tobacco company on the top of South St called Loyes Tobacco Co. My father used to cart the tobacco from the bonded stores up to Loyes Tobacco Co.

(para. 6) Once I went down to the gasworks near the Basin and someone said do you want a job? So I spent the day filling up sacks and got £3 10d, that was a lot of money. It was hard to find work. They offered me a job in Plymouth instead of going to the war. But I didn't, I wanted to go to war. I wanted to be a sailor.

(para. 9) They used to call my Dad a 'doctor', He worked down at the Sawmills, at Gabrials Wharf, and a lot people went there to learn their trade. When I left school I went down Sydney Lee, down Haven Road, printers. I was a reader. After that you couldn't get work. So I had to walk around like, looking for work.

(para. 8) My father worked in the ice factory in Bonhay Road. Stonemans the butchers would keep stuff in the ice factory overnight. It was quite a large place. Its' all gone now. It was right opposite the Queen Alexandra pub. There was a little knap there that the horse could go down to drink.

(para. 6) The Tannery in those days was an awful place. They used to wear clogs because the place was always flowing in water. But it never used to stink as much as Oppenheimers. That was the commercial part of Exeter really. All the people worked there and they lived in Preston St and Coombe St. And they all lived in rooms.

(paras. 8 & 9) Of course, along Commercial Road, there were foundries, ironworks, JL Thomas, the candle factory. I worked there for two years. It was hard work. You used to have to go over a little bridge. The other half of the factory, they used to collect animal remains to make bonemeal – you can imagine what it smelt like. Where I was in the candle department it was quite dark, it was a long room. In one half had the candlemaking machines that the men worked. They would bring the candles over in big coffin-like boxes for the girls to pack. You had to fetch everything, your own packing cases, glue your paper, melt your glue. You had to wrap and pack the candles, 36 in a pack, 24 packs in a case. Nail it all down, label your case, all for tuppence ha'penny.

(para. 3) The Brewery was down the other end, we used to hear them in their clogs, going to work in the morning, waking us up. I was about 9 then, and I'm 70 now.

9. FOOD

(para. 15) I remember Marks the shops that grandfer Taylor always got his butter and eggs from. There was a butchers shop where he would get his meat from to make his Season Pudding. He was a wonderful cook. He would take the beef skirts in thick gravy, with a thick pastry. He called it his Season Pudding. It was marvellous. Nobody ever did custard like he did.

(para. 8) I remember lending my mother ninepence when I went to work and by the time you got home there would be a lovely roast dinner. She'd get threepenneth of breast of lamb from Eastmans in Queens St.

(para 17) Bread and dripping would often be the main meal. We were lucky because there would often be meat left over at the ice factory and it supplemented my father's income.

(para. 16) And men coming around from the slaughterhouse with a bucket full of chitlings. All fresh, it was beautiful. Food was much fresher then. The lady, Badcocks, they were called, would come around with the horse and cart with big churns of milk, dip it out and put it into your jug. But we also had a dairy, just two doors up from Marks, in Westcott slip we used to call it. In the Lower Market, all the farmers used to bring their produce in and it was auctioned off. Saturdays you could go into the market and all the farmers had stalls, butter, cream everything you wanted. The Lower Market was bombed of course.

para. 20) Opposite where we lived was the butter factory, Orpins. Never ate margarine all through the war. I can't eat it even now.

(para. 18) There was a Fish & Chips shop near Sun Street - Prestons. I also remember the soup kitchens at the lower market. We used to go up there and queue up. Cider was part of the scene but people drank beer mostly. Beer was quite cheap you see. My father used to get a penn'eth of beer. There was a lot of cider around just before the war though. It used to come from the farms.

11. HEALTH

(para. 28) I was born in 39 Preston Street, its gone now. I had a cousin lived next door to me called George Carpenter. He swallowed a coin one day and of course in those days you couldn't take him to hospital so my uncle had him upside down and just shook him and shook him until he was sick and they got the coin out.

DIPHTHERIA & SCARLETT FEVER

(para. 31) I remember the diptheria, a lot a people down there had it. They thought I had it at one time, but I was alright. My mother used to call me 'hardass'. Because I never got anything. My aunty and uncle died of 'flu' but I never got it.

(para 12) Unfortunately, she and her husband died of diptheria, so my mum and dad took in this family of three. Harold, William and George Jarvis. Then there were six of us all together.

(para. 14) There was an epidemic of diptheria and it was very bad. I lost my little cousin a fortnight before my sister contracted it. He was out the isolation hospital and my Mum and her sister went out to see him. My mum went in even though they said, 'if you've got children, you go in at your own risk', so they put gowns on and went in to see him. But a fortnight later my sister got it, she was very ill. This diptheria was really nasty and scarlett fever of course was really bad then. It killed a lot of children. There was no such thing as immunisation then. I've got the one sister, she was lucky to survive, and a twin brother.

(para. 27) My sister had diptheria, she came home from Whipton for a week and then I was took with scarlett fever. I was away for a month. I only saw my mother once a week and she had to look through the glass. I was about 7. One of the children from No.2 died of diptheria and one of the Northcotts, who lived by the brewery.

INFANT MORTALITY

(para. 27) I remember the woman who used to live in No. 2, she was awful poor. My mother used to make them stew. I saw their little girl once, just scratching and scratching. She died, she was 'walking' with lice. My mother said afterwards that that was what killed her. My mother wouldn't let me play with her.

(para. 12) I remember once my mum told me that her little friend that she used to play with, a little boy, died. My mum didn't know so she went to call for him one day and the mother said 'well come in my dear'. She went in and there he was lying in his coffin. My gran went over and told the woman off for it, she was only 5 years old. My mother never really got over it.

10. HOUSING

(para. 5) I was born in Larkbeare Cottages at the bottom of Larkbeare Road. It was a little cottage with no light and no heating and it opened up into a big courtyard of a dozen or so houses. There was a communal washhouse and toilets and it wasn't until Sept 7th 1927 that we were granted then council house in Newman Road. Of course going there with with heating and lights was no comparison.

(para. 21) An uncle of mine lived in Preston Street, in the very small cottage, very dark, but he left there, like we did, in 1927.

(para 3) Some of the courts had four houses in them with one standpipe for the lot. Some had four, some had six.

(Isaac para. 12) At Albert Place, you went in the front door and there was the kitchen, and the coal hole was in the corner. You had to down out the door and down the lane a little bit to a yard, which was covered over as well. That's where the tap was. In the night we had rats there. We used to be in bed, me Fred and Harry, and we could hear bump, bump, bump. You would hear them, but we weren't worried about it. The toilet was out in the corner of the yard. You couldn't go in there at night because of the cockroaches.

(para. 3) In Stepcote Hill, from the bottom there were sixteen steps and on the right was a little passage. There was one house there. You had to go to the top of the steps and open the door, because my father used to put a stone there to stop it opening. We had one of those toilets, you know a wooden, flat one. We had shutters to our window. There were wide ledges, we used to play on. And big beams on the ceiling that you could swing on. We knew someone who slept out, we could here the stone being moved back and she used to sleep there. We had two bedrooms, Mum partitioned one off, for the boys and girls. From the passage you went up some steps and out there was the toilet and the tap was out the back as well.

(para. 20 & 21) It was all tenement buildings, we just had rooms really. Right opposite the school there was a door and a long passage way through. You went in the passage and there was a door and that was one room where an old couple lived and next to them was the staircase that went right up through the building. You went up one floor and we had the two rooms there. You went up again and Mrs Dyer lived on the next floor. You went up again to the top and the Gribbles lived up there. So we all lived over to one side of the passage which lead out through to the back. There was a yard out the back and, up some steps, a little garden. But there was a flush toilet there and a tap. When we moved in there was Mr and Mrs Oliver in the front room and Mr Cook in the back. There were five of us and after a while my gran came to live with us. Then there was Mr and Mrs Dyer and in the end they must have had 7 or 8 children. Then up above them was Miss Gribble with her two daughters and her mother. And we all shared that one toilet and tap. There were no lights or anything, we had oil lamps, but right outside the house on the wall was a gas lamp, and you'd watch the man come along and light the lamp. So looking out the window we had plenty of light but there was no light in the house. The houses had these passages through and out to the back.

(para. 28) I've been in some houses to play with other kids where they had no electric and all you could see of them, when you first went in, was the whites of their eyes.

12. POLICE

(para. 18) The West Quarter was a working class area, a really busy place. Coombe Street was a rough street. Two policemen at a time.

(para. 23) My boss, who I worked for, was a policeman, Inspector Alford. He was going up a lane up Coombe St and a frying pan hit him on the head. They was fighting. We called Coombe St, 'Do as you like Street, Monkey Town'.

(para. 5) There was only one policeman in Exeter who would dare to go into the Quarter on his own and that was PC Barrett. He was a very keen traffic control gentleman. Normally, though they would go down in twos and threes.

(para. 19) Very often cups of tea were left out for the police. You had a good relationship with the police except when they were after one of yours. It was surprising how much people protected each other. There was a bond. A thing that I always remember, if you were a kid and you did anything wrong, the copper would give you a clip around the earhole and say 'I'll tell your dad of you' and that was enough. If your dad found out he would threaten to take his belt off.

(para. 5) What I want to stress is that they weren't rogues. They were poor, they had no money but they kept themselves decent. They weren't fond of seeing the police, they didn't want them interfering.

(para. 27) There was another one, Chippy Diamond, if the police was after him he would run across the rooftops and that. They didn't welcome the police but in the main they was law-abiding people.

(para. 24) During the war me and my Douglas was scrumping apples and I found a handbag, it was full. I gave it to my mother and she called the police. We had to show them where we found it. It turned out that it belonged to a woman who'd been murdered and thrown in the river. She was carrying on with a Yank and I think it was him done it. Her and her husband lived in Holloway St.

(para. 25) I remember PC Barrett, a big chap, with a big belly.

13. POVERTY

PAWN SHOPS

(para. 4) I always remember, the rent man used to come on Monday's, there was a place in South St. called Bannister's who was a pawnbroker. Dad would have a best suit - Mondays it went into Bannister's.

(para. 11) There were also a lot of people who would lend money. Also, of course, they went to the pawnbrokers. There was a pawnbroker in South Street by the name of Bannister. My brother worked for him. It was bombed in the blitz. People used to go up there and put perhaps a man's suit if it was any good at all.

(para. 9) My father had a Maltese Cross because he bought a pawn ticket for sixpence.

POACHING

(paras 18 & 19) There used to be a lot of poaching. One boy was being chased for it, and he run home, up Stepcote Hill, and his mother had just had a baby and was still in bed. He said 'mother, the police is chasing me' so she said 'quick give us the fish' and she stuck it down the end of the bed. Old Slacky had one in a pram once.

Ockety Taylor, lived in Coombe St he was another salmon poacher.

RENT

(para. 3) Our rent man was a gentleman called Jones and he used to come around and of course we had a very good system of communication. When the rent man would come, the people who were having to leave it until next week would have been tipped off and would be out. Sometimes the kids would have to say, 'sorry Mum's out now, come back next week'.

14. PUBS

(para. 1) Ewings Lane ran from St Edmunds Street down to the courtyard behind the *Bishop's Blaize* pub which is still there.

(para. 18) My grandfather's brother, George, he kept the *Teignmouth Inn* in Edmund Street. Every Friday night my grandfather used to take me there. There was all sawdust on the floor, I used to go upstairs to the living quarters and my grandfather would stay downstairs drinking his guinness. A brother of his had *The Sawyers Arms* in Preston Street. Then another brother had a pub in Mary Arches Street, it was the *London Inn* then. Then another brother had *The Grapes* in South Street. All brothers of Grandfather Taylor. They all had pubs except my grandfather.

(para. 17) Florrie used to live next door to the pub (*The Kings Head*, West St). Saturday nights was the time. They'd get drunk and fight. It was the women.

(para. 24) I used to swim, once a year in September, from on the corner of Okehampton St. where there used to be a pub called the *Seven Stars* and we would swim from there to Double Locks, or zig-zig from there to the *Port Royal*. It was for Semper Fidelis swimming club.

(para. 4) The *Duke of York* pub used to be in Coombe St. and the Tap & Barrel in Burnthouse Lane used to be in Sun Street and was called the *Dolphin Inn*.

(para. 8) It was right opposite the *Queen Alexandra* pub (Bonhay Road). There was a little knap there that the horse could go down to drink.

(para. 18) There was a pub called the *Duke of York* in Coombe St. and every Saturday night about nine o'clock there was a gentleman in there who would pick an argument and he would have a fight. As kids we could stay up late on a Saturday so we would all get up around there at about nine to watch the fight going on. The person that used to do the fighting, he wasn't very tall. He would have his best suit on to go to the pub, but his missus would come up early and if he decided he was going to fight he had to take his suit off because that had to go in the pawn on Monday. We didn't think nothing of it. The only time it really impressed on us was when he has some long red pants and vest on. My god, she would lay the law down to him, she threw him out the window once. Fighting in those days was always one to one and if one was getting a bit knocked about people would finish it. There was nothing vicious.

(para. 12) There was the Teignmouth Inn on the corner of Ewings Lane. And there was another one near the House that Moved called the Kings Head. My mother told me that her other grandmother kept that pub but then it wasn't a pub. She used to deal in potatoes that would arrive in ships at the Quay. Sailing ships in those days.

(para. 13) There was a Mill at Cricklepit and there was a pub there called the Bishops Blaize. In my days somebody called *Gaitor* kept that and very nice they were too. They was another pub at the top of Preston Street. In fact there were several pubs. It was thickly populated you know.

(para. 7) . Next to the St Marys Steps church there was a pub, the Bakers kept it. On the bottom of Quay Lane there used to be a pub which leaned against the City Wall. It was kept by a big Exeter family called the Lee family - Edgar Lee.

(para. 2) My mother's side was called Walleron, they were fish merchants and they had the *Duke of York*.

(para. 15) The Dorothy family were boating people. There was one landing by the Prospect, another by the ferry and another by *Jarvis?* Avenue. The Dorothy family kept the *Fountain Inn* (The Prospect) before the Maunders.

(para. 6) They roughest areas was around the pubs, but you just avoided it. Clarks kept the Duke of York for years.

15. RATS

(para. 12) You had to down out the door and down the lane a little bit to a yard, which was covered over as well. That's where the tap was. In the night we had rats there. We used to be in bed, me Fred and Harry, and we could hear bump, bump, bump. You would hear them, but we weren't worried about it.

(para. 13) I always slept in the middle. I wouldn't sleep on the edge because I was afraid of rats. They used to tease me and say 'you got to go on the edge tonight'. But they give in in the end and they me go in the middle.

(para. 7) I knew what rat turds looked like because I'd seen a family of rats once, but I didn't see mice. The places down Frog St was full of rats. My father came in with a cage, with bait, and he put it under the stair. Next morning I happened to be walking past and he was just taking it out and he had a whole family of rats in there, with loads and loads of babies. A mother, father and family, they was bloomin' great things.

16. RIVER

REGATTA

(para. 24) I used to swim, once a year in September, from on the corner of Okehampton St. where there used to be a pub called the Seven Stars and we would swim from there to Double Locks, or zig-zig from there to the Port Royal. It was for *Semper Fidelis* swimming club.

(para. 7) I started swimming when I was 7. I became Exeter's champion for 6 years in succession. When we had our regatta in the River, down by the Seven Stars. Regatta day was a glorious day.

(para. 6) I spent a lot of time on the River, at the Regattas and that.

BOATING

(para. 8) We didn't spend a lot of time on the river, of course you had to pay.

(para. 25) It was ninepence to borrow a boat and if you was overdue you had a pay more so some of us used to leave our boats further down.

(Isaac para. 5) We went once or twice by boat halfway to the double locks.

(para.14) There were 4 boatyards on the River. Gregorys had two, Marks had one and Lyons had one. They used to have canoes and skips, mind you they was expensive, sixpence for an afternoon. Sometimes you would pick it up very early in the morning, you would go right down to the canal, to the Turf, get the boat out and lift it into the river and you could go to Dawlish Warren. Very often we used to get stuck on sandbanks. It was hard work going back.

(para. 24) The River Exe used to flood quite a lot. I remember coming home on leave. I went to Marks on the other side of Exe Bridge to hire a boat. He said that the water was running pretty fast but I said I wouldn't take it far. I d as far as the weir and tried to shoot across the river and managed to get to Haven Banks side by the ferry there, which around the bend it wasn't too bad. It was quite of thrill to be on the river in flood. The Quay itself would often flood. The Ballast Heap was down towards to canal, near the Scouts hut. There they would pile up the rubbish from a nearby quarry which the ships would use as ballast.

17. SCHOOLS

(para. 1) My grandmother used to clean the school at Rack Street and Central School. Granny Ley, my mother's mother lived in the Quarter, Frances Ley. She lived in Rack Street and then she went to live up in school house at Central School.

(para. 2) I went to Central School, before that to Preston St. infants.

(para. 15) I went to school in the Rack Street school. In those days schools were run by the churches but Rack Street school wasn't really attached to any church. I was posh, I was a Methodist and my Dad pushed me into the Mint School. Most went to Central School which was C of E. Mr Chick was headmaster of the Mint School.

(para. 2) There was another school that they used to call the Rack Street Naval College, but Preston St school was a smaller school.

(para. 4) We used to call Preston Street school, *Dadges*, why they called it that I don't know but you went there until you were 7 years old when you went to Central School in Rack Street. The Headmaster then was called Granville. I think he was before his time. We used to go to a school camp in Dawlish Warren every year. I went to three of those. And we went to Plymouth *Makern* Barracks. I went there twice. They used to graduate what you had to pay depending on your circumstances. My mother used to pay 8 shillings for a fortnight. I don't know of any other schools in Exeter that did that sort of thing so Mr Granville was a good man. He used to live on the premises.

(para. 2) We went to the little school right opposite number 42. When they moved us out they knocked our houses down and built the church army semi's. When we lived there we could see right into the school because it was all tenement buildings because we lived on the second floor. We went there from 5 -7 and then onto Central until 14, that was a C of E school.

(para. 8) The son of one of the Marks went to Exeter School and wore a straw boater.

(para. 13) My husband was born in Fore Street, we went to Central school together.

18. SHOPS

(para. 10) With this tuppence I would go with a couple of mates either to *Mrs Form* who had a shop in Quay Hill or to the little sweet shop at the bottom of Quay Lane.

(para. 15) I remember Marks the shops that grandfer Taylor always got his butter and eggs from. There was a butchers shop where he would get his meat from to make his Season Pudding.

(para 11 & 12) You know the house that moved, that was my friends house, Cummins, they were called, next door he was a policeman, Mr Pips, he had a sweet shop, next door to that was Passmores that sold groceries and that, then there was a little door that used to be Mrs Street. Next door to that was Marks', and then Mrs Marks a relation. Then Stones, sweets and all that, then the Diary. Then a little shop that sold vegetables. Next door to that was a sweet shop. Then Mr Brewer the shoe repairer then there was a house and then at the top where Endicotts is there was a dairy.

Down the other side there used to be a secondhand shop called Andrews and then *Boats?* the baker. Then my music teacher, Ellis. Then there was an archway. Then there was a shop down the bottom, Tootles and then the butcher and milkshop. And then there was a pub where Florrie used to live, The King's Head. Then the fish and chip shop. then Frankums and Chanters and then the rag and bone shop. And there was a tyre shop and then the house that I lived in, and then the lodging house at the bottom of Rack Street. , the grocer. Then 'Daddy Whites', where you could a farthings worth of cocoa and a farthings worth of sugar together.

(para. 21) There were shops all the way along Coombe St., both sides. I can remember there was one little place where you would get up to Central School where the girls used to go, the boys had to go around Rack St. way. There was a fish and chip shop. There were a number of grocer shops, the Westcotts, Tottles was another one. Clapps used to sell greengrocery and they also sold paraffin.

(para. 30) 'Old Scrammy' they used to call Mr Edwards because he had a gammy arm. He had a little shop up the 'cut'. He sold coal and sweets. He used to roll up the newspaper and reach in and put the sweets in, and just before that he'd been handling the coal. But then I'm alive aren't I?

(para. 2) I think the West Quarter was split into two lots. It started at the bottom of South St. at Palace Gate where you went down to Coombe St. All down through there used to be all shops.

(para. 6) . Even down there, there were some very rich and influential people, the Marks that kept the poultry shop. The daughter of one of them married Hammetts diary.

(para. 1) We lived in Frog Street. My parents kept a secondhand shop, my mother always called it an Antique store. They were called Phillips.

(para. 10) Coming out of the army, my father got his gratuity. He said to my mother I am going to business, and he bought horse and cart. He went all out Silverton way for mushrooms and come home with a barrow full. They had a little fruit shop in the window of a house at the time. He was about 4 or 5 hours late one night. He walked in and my mother said 'where have you been'. 'I was coming across the bloody bridge' he said 'and the bloody 'orse dropped down daid. Me cart was full of mushrooms, the 'orse fell down and the whole thing went in the bloody water'. My mother said my poor father was white as a sheet.

(para. 11) Then my father got the store from Mr Chanter. He went up to Cox's showroom in South St. next door the three balls. And he bought a load of stuff in the sale and that's how he started his big store. It was a lovely place, in the store, a big place. Upstairs my older brothers kept pigeons up there. When my older sister wanted to get married, we had the reception up there. All the lot of us had to go up there and scrub. I was 8 at the time.

19. WASH HOUSES

(para. 9) I remember my mother going very early to the washhouse in Larkbeare Road, which was very small and having to load up with stick and coal to start heating the water. It was a laborious job.

(para. 14) We used to take my mother's washing up the washhouse. Penny to go and have a bath on a Saturday morning. I used to every Saturday morning. It was a big place, with dryers, like clothes horses that you pulled out and put your clothes on. There weren't many baths, you often had to wait until somebody came up. That was in *Tithe?* Place they used to call it, at the top of Rack Street and then turn right. And you can get in the other way in the Back Lane they called it, where Florrie used to live.

(para. 3) There was a washhouse at the back of Albert Place. I saw my mother in there. We used to go up there for a bath as well. You were in little cubicles.

(para. 22) Many the time I gone to the washhouse. That was quite near Central School. Coming off Coombe St. you went up a little knap to a sort of square, there was a church off to one side and a little gap that ran down alongside the church brought you right out to the top of Rack St School and then you'd go further up to go Central School. There was another entrance going up towards Central School that would bring you round and down over some steps that would bring you into the washhouse place. There was always plenty of hot water. All these stone (*?ceramic*) tubs all around. The water was piped in and you had taps for hot water. There were mangles which you had to pay extra for. Invariably we would take the stuff home and run it through the mangle at home. My brothers and myself would bath together.

(para. 3) The 'bath and washhouse' was off of Rack Street. They used to share their washing facilities. That was just near Central School. I don't think its there now. My mother used to take me over there sometimes. They had racks up where they would hang clothes and lots of steam, I can see the steam now. The women had wicker baskets that they used to put their washing in and they'd struggle home with it between them. It was big, though it probably seemed bigger to me.

(para. 17) I remember the washhouse. We had to take it all up in the morning. Each woman was in a cubicle with her big white stiff overalls, they was all singing and happy. If you was ill, the other women would take your washing up for you.

20. THE WARS

(para. 26) My husband was in the Devon's during the war. He was in Burma.

(para. 8) My father was a drapers porter. He had a barrow and he would go to any of the drapers who wanted him. He was in the First World War. Then he had TB and was out Whipton Hospital.

(para. 6) . They offered me a job in Plymouth instead of going to the war. But I didn't, I wanted to go to war. I wanted to be a sailor.

(para. 7) The concrete houses were built first in Newman Road to house people from the West Quarter. Just before the war they built the newer estate, the brick houses and we got a house up here. When the war broke out my mother went to live down the old part, with her mother. Rosina lived in 96, down the bottom. So during the war my Mum moved, with my brother and sister, with my Nan and a big family from London came to live in our house.

(para. 9) I was rather ashamed of myself. My Dad won the military medal during the First World War. I couldn't understand his attitude at the time and didn't really respect his views. It wasn't until afterwards that I found out that he had had a really hard time.

(para. 16) One of my brothers was killed in the war. Jim, my brother, worked for Whipple Brother as a carpenter. When the war started he joined up and became a flight engineer. I was in the navy from 1935 on but I caught a packet at Dunkirk so that was me finished from the sailing point of view. My sister was in the WRACS. So it was a family of servicemen. In fact in those days it was the best job to be in, you got three meals a day and you got paid well.

(para. 12 & 13) Unfortunately, the war broke out and I had to give up my job and go and work in the parachute factory, in St Thomas. We used to work 12 hour day and night shifts, just sitting at a machine.

I missed the Friday night blitz but I came home in time for the Sunday one. I was at home in Burnthouse Lane, with my Mum and Dad.

(para. 12 & 13) My Dad was head firewatcher in Colleton Hill during the war. We had one of those Anderson shelters in the house. Do you remember those petrol bombs? Well we weren't very far from the blast of that one. My father come in just before and pushed himself in the shelter and said 'this one's for us'. He ran out straight after and said 'it's bloody daylight out yere'. It was a lovely sight to see it all lit up.

My husband was a King's Messenger, taking messages for the Army, fireman and that. As soon as it was over he came down for me.