

## TRANSCRIPTION OF INTERVIEWS WITH LOCAL PEOPLE

### ELIZABETH ELLEN (or HELLEN) KENT nee GOTHAM

*(interviewed by a local newspaper in about 1951)*

Elizabeth Ellen Kent grew up at the 'Shoulder of Mutton' in Fulford when her parents were the licensees there in the 1890's. When she became a young lady she had left the pub, but had returned 30 years later when her husband became the licensee, and she herself has held the license for the 11 years since his death in 1940. Ellen now runs the pub on her own, apart from having some assistance with the housework from two grand-daughters and some help on Sundays.



Ellen Kent with son Harry

*(Photograph courtesy of Staffordshire Sentinel Newspapers)*

Each Saturday Mrs. Kent goes into Hanley to do her shopping and this is a trip which gives her a lot of pleasure. "*It is like going home*" she says, as her family came from the Potteries and she herself had once lived there. But she has no desire to return to the urban life. "*I've become used to the country life*" she says "*and I wouldn't like to go back to the town*".

When asked how she manages to work so hard at the age of 82 she replied "*It is hard work that keeps me going. It is when people sit about and mope that troubles start. I don't think it is any use worrying*". Trade is not what it used to be however and Mrs. Kent recalls with some nostalgia the days when beer was 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d. a half-pint and spirits were 2d. a 'shot'. Mrs Kent has also noticed a difference in behaviour. "*People are much quieter now*" she says "*there is no so much rowdiness as there used to be*".

### JOHN HENRY 'HARRY' KENT

*(interviewed by Alexander Ward on 28<sup>th</sup> October 1996)*

Harry Kent was 85 when the interview took place. He said that he had lived at the 'Shoulder of Mutton' for some of his childhood. His father, also named John Henry, was born in 1870 at the Greyhound Inn in Saverley Green and his mother, Elizabeth Ellen (or Helen) nee Gotham, was born a year or two after his father. They were married at St. Nicholas Church in Fulford and then went to live in the Potteries where his father worked in the deep pit mines in Hanley. Then in 1917, when Harry's father was about thirty or forty, the Kents had moved into the Shoulder of Mutton. It had apparently

been vacant for some time. They kept cows, pigs, and horses in the stable and shed that was next to the pub, though separated from it by a walkway in which nine-pin bowling was played. The fields behind the Shoulder of Mutton were owned by Mr. Critchlow of Fulford Hall and the Kents rented them in order to graze their animals.



Harry Kent outside his house in Cheadle in 1966  
*(Photograph courtesy of Nola Ward of Fulford)*

Harry recalled that the men in the pub, most of whom smoked black twist, all drank beer supplied by Charles Bunting Ales in Uttoxeter. They played cards sitting round a table, playing a game called Don. The beer was brought to the pub in 18 gallon barrels and stored in the cold stone cellar and when anyone ordered a drink Mrs. Kent or one of the family would go down to the cellar to fetch the beer in a big jug. Soft drinks were delivered on a flat waggon. Other deliveries to the pub included fish and bread which was delivered by Bengry's of Normacott. The deliveries were made in gas powered vans.

The pub had very strict opening times, opening at 7-30pm and closing at 10-00pm. And Harry's parents were always very keen to uphold those opening hours

There was a very small room which was called the snug, for obvious reasons, whilst the main room at the front of the pub was where dances were often held. If a traveller was passing by and needed accommodation the Shoulder of Mutton had to provide it as it was an Inn and well as a pub.

Fulford had a cricket ground which was located on Saxon's field, close to the new school. The pitch was reckoned to be one of the best in the area and Fulford village cricket team won lots of cups. Harry Averill was the club patron and Harry's brother was one of the players. There was also a football team in Fulford.

Harry recalled that many carts visited Fulford selling all sorts of things. At one time a lawyer was killed when his horse was startled by something as he was about to turn out of Stallington Lane into Fulford Dale. The trap overturned and the lawyer fell down the 15 foot drop at the side of the road and was killed. Some people claim to have seen the lawyer's ghost on his horse close to the Wheatsheaf pub at Blacklake and there are still some residents in Fulford who know the area as 'Lawyer's trap'. Harry said another ghost that people claim to have seen is that of his mother, sitting in a rocking chair in an upstairs room in the Shoulder of Mutton and wearing a cardigan.



'Lawyer's Trap' on the Stallington Road. The 15-foot drop from the road can be clearly seen beyond the fence.

Harry said that he had many happy memories after living in the Shoulder of Mutton and playing cards with his friends.

**WILLIAM 'BILL' AND MARGARET ELLEN JENKINSON**  
*(interviewed by Alexander Ward on 28<sup>th</sup> September 1996)*

At 85 William Jenkinson was the oldest resident in Fulford at the time of the interview. He had been born in Fulford and has lived there all his life. He is just a month or two older than his old school friend Harry Kent.

William said that four generations of Jenkinsons have lived in the 200-year old 'Rose Cottage' at the bottom of Baulk Lane in Fulford, his grandfather, his father, himself, and his son. He said that when he was young he remembers there being wash pits in the village in the area that is now beneath the houses of Tudor Hollow. These wash pits were later replaced by wash houses. They had no proper kitchens in those days but had coal boilers and a zinc bath which was put in front of the fire when it was used.

William worked at John Hill & Sons Nurseries at Spot Acre from the age of fourteen. His father would get him up at 5-30am in order that he could walk to the nurseries in time to start work at 6-30am. He would work in the field all day until 5-30pm and then walk home again.

William's mother was a cleaner at the old (National) school. There was no water at the school so they had to fetch their own water from the well behind the butchers at the Olde House. Neither were there any flushing toilets at the school, just two toilet pans that had to be carried across the green to be emptied. There were two rooms at the school, one for infants and one for juniors. The school was built in two parts, a large room for the juniors and a gallery in a small room for the infants. William remembered that at one time there were 94 children at the school and 2 teachers. There were mixed classes of boys and girls and they all sat in rows on long benches at long desks that were joined together. The rows of benches, each of which had ink in inkwells, were graded upwards according to the standard. Children came from Fulford, Stallington, Crossgate, Meir heath, Fulford Dale, Saverley Green, and Mossgate. Everyone walked or cycled to school. They had to take their own sandwiches into school and some people often took their own tea to drink that they kept warm by the coal boiler. The pupils played on the green or in the road as there was no playground, but this wasn't a problem as there were no cars coming through the village in those days. The boys played marbles, whip and top, cricket, and some football and the girls played rounders and had sewing classes. The boys made raffia baskets. For punishment the pupils were either given detention or were caned, depending how bad the offence was judged to be. Children left school at either age 13 or 14. William left when he was 14. The head teacher lived in School House, now the home of Tom Tunnicliffe, which was on the edge of the village green next to the Shoulder of Mutton.

Just before the School was knocked down in 1959 William and Earnest Jenkinson, who still sang in the church choir when he was 77, rescued the school bell and carried it up to St. Nicholas Church. They carried the bell on their backs until they got to the steep hill leading up to the church, and from there they dragged it. The school was knocked down because no-one would pay the £50 purchase



price that was being asked.

William recalled that people had to walk to the farm for their milk and to the well for the water. The Olde House was the local butcher's shop and they killed the animals there. William vividly remembers having to pull on a piece of rope that was tied to an animal's feet so that the animal would be stretched out in order that the butcher could then kill it and butcher it. Being rather off the beaten track the village had to be self-sufficient and so there were many other businesses in Fulford in addition to the butcher and the pub. There was a wheelwright who made such things as carts and coffins, a blacksmith in Post Office Terrace who made horseshoes and metal brackets, a cobbler, also in Post Office Terrace, who made and repaired shoes, and a shop that sold grocery and other foods. The rest of the villager's needs came on visiting delivery carts. The cobbler was William's grandfather and he made all of their shoes.

William's uncle Joe was the village dentist in those days and William well remembers his uncle Joe pulling Harry Kent's teeth out when he was 8. He put hemp and cobbler's wax round the tooth and then told Harry to lie on the floor. William then had to hold Harry by the ears while his uncle pulled the tooth out. The doctor who lived at Blythe Bridge also pulled teeth out.



Bill Jenkinson outside 'Rose Cottage' in Baulk Lane in 1996  
(*Photograph courtesy of Nola Ward of Fulford*)

William also has many memories about the church and church life. One of his earliest memories is the music in the church that was provided by means of an harmonium, accompanied by William's grandfather Joseph Jenkinson on a fiddle until he died in 1902. The Rev. Harry Walter Banks Wright succeeded Rev. Daniel Davenport in 1908. He was commonly known as Vic Wright and legend has it that he once locked himself in the church and cut down all of the pews to the level of those in use today. He became incumbent in 1915 and stayed until 1921 when he moved to Checkley. After his death his body was interred in the present churchyard. Rev's. Drinkwater and Longridge then served through to 1937, and during this time William was involved in fixing the boiler, grave digging, lighting the lamps, scything the grass with a badger hook, and trimming the ivy on the walls. The church illumination at that time came from 12 paraffin lamps, 4 hanging lamps over the aisle, 3 lamps on each side, 2 chancel lamps, 1 vestry lamp, 1 porch lamp, and 1 gate lamp. In addition to the Alter candles, three further candles were placed in side of the Alter. In August 1938 electric lighting was fitted. In 1937 Rev. Arthur Edward Smith became the incumbent and he remained at Fulford until 1945 when he moved to Dunston and Coppenhall. It is said that it was he who designed the choir stalls which, together with the pulpit, were installed in 1937. The next incumbent was Rev. Robert Edward Jones who was described as 'a stern man'. He left to go to Becton North Shrewsbury in 1954 and was followed by Rev. James Arthur Lloyd who continued until 1961 and was replaced by Rev. Rupert

Wesley Thompson in 1961. He was said to be somewhat of a recluse and eventually died in the 'Old Vicarage' in 1980. Following his death it was decided to sell the 'Old Vicarage' which was a 'property of large dimensions'. Rev. Harry Myers then became Priest-in-Charge. He was a man of great humanity who was loved by everyone. He was the first to occupy the new vicarage in Tudor Hollow. He died suddenly in 1987, just before his retirement, and the news was received with much sadness.



Rose Cottage in 2006

William left John Hill & Sons nursery some time in the 1960's and went to work as a gardener at Stallington Hall. He lived at 'Rose Cottage' right up to his death on 14th September 2005. He was 93 years old.