

## **Memories of Carlton.**

The recent sad death of Olive Smith reminded me that Jill and I visited her one day about 10 years ago and she gave me a poem about Carlton which had been written by her friend Nora when she was a little girl in Carlton School. It is a delightful sketch of Carlton, possibly from 1923-29, which may stir some memories.

Nora was Nora Alcock from Carlton Village shop who married a Dutchman and moved to Holland before 1940. The story goes that her husband, who had been a bulb salesman, dismantled his car and buried it to prevent its requisition by the Germans. The poem was in a letter to 'Ena', who possibly lived in Higham on the Hill. It mentions Nora's sister Gerty, who is buried in Carlton churchyard, and was able to remember everyone in the village. There were a few blanks in the poem that I could not decipher and there was also a letter to Ena.

Dear Ena

Sending this to you. I wrote it when I was a little girl in Carlton School. It's no good but it will remind you of Carlton, how it used to be and who lived there. Gerty remembered them all when I was talking to her. I couldn't remember Bessies ( Tun, Flin, Yenn, Quin, Fern's?) name but Gerty knew them all and old Jim Crack .....they used to call him, but I forgot to ask her who used to live in those three cottages before the Breams came. I've just remembered Mrs Tebbett because I often used to go and fetch her to go to church. She lived in the last cottage and she couldn't walk very well. In the other houses I've been lots of times. Don't you remember how we used to take the milk up there.

Love, Nora.

Olive Smith was 84 when she died but if Nora, Gerty or Ena are alive, I hope that such a pretty piece of village history should be published in Carlton News. I offer the poem as a memorial to Olive Smith.

John Whitehead.

## Our Village.

There is a little village, in good old Leicestershire,  
Where flowers shed their fragrant scent in many gardens there,  
Its name is just this-Carlton!, but just listen everyone,  
It's the dearest little village, that ever the sun shone on.

For instance there's the Parsonage, where roses often bloom  
And rhododendrons rival there with lilac and with broom,  
.....and daffodils shoot up in Spring,  
While high up in the tall fir trees, the pretty birds do sing.

First we'll start at the very end by Morri's, Perry's, Orton's and Becks,  
Who keep cows and horses without end, maybe donkeys! Who knows? And speckled  
Sussex,

Just by these is the old horsepit from where horses and cows drink out  
Among the willows waterhens lay and sit and ducks swim roundabout.

Now we'll come to the village school which stands on the village green  
And if you peek through the iron rails flowers can be seen.  
The girls have nice little gardens where lovely flowers grow,  
While in the plots the young lads glean, lettuce, potatoes, broad and kidney beans.

Just a few steps further and here's the old stile, in all weathers it stands serene,  
Opposite Mr H Oldacres house and farm and the lane leading up to it can be seen.  
Mr Alcocks orchard, croft and shed are next as you will see,  
They keep White Lagorns, Rhode Island Reds, and cows-one, two else three.  
Over the way is the old school house, wait a minute, I'll explain, you needn't grouse,  
On either side of the front door the stately fir trees grow high, ten feet or more  
Higher up is Gulston House, its garden full of gooseberry and currant trees, I say.  
And strawberries and raspberry canes all grow in neat array.

By its side are three cottages which stand and face you in a row,  
And next to these is George Prestons house and him I'm sure you'll know.  
Next door is the Malt Shovel Inn up whose walls rambler roses climb,  
And hide from sight the old brick walls, the mortar and the lime.

Next door stands the Carpenter's shop and the Blacksmith is by its side  
Here men work all day with saw and plane and shoe the horses on which we ride.  
Now back to Alcocks who keep the village shop  
In and out the people go all day for something, perhaps bread or maybe Ginger Pop

Then there's old Mrs Freemans and although her garden's very small  
Gay flowers bloom there beside her old stone wall.  
Next are two cottages; twins you know for up they stand so staraight and tall.  
They're just alike – from the chimney pots to the windows, gates and walls.

Opposite is the Old Stone House which is about Carlton's largest farm.  
There are many buildings round about it, also there's a large, red Dutch barn.  
Facing stands another house, Mr Hollis the Castrator lives in this,  
There's a nice sized garden by it's side and by the railings round about it, this house you'll  
never miss.

Now we come to the village church, it's a dear little place you know  
Where all the people praise the Lord and on Sundays to the services go.  
Over the way is the Manor House, Mr Jesson is a farmer also.  
He sows and reaps the corn and ploughs and to the station with milk he goes.

Now by the road on the opposite side stands another house all by itself,

And a little farther up are some more,  
three are tiled I think, and those thatched are four,  
And nice little gardens in front of each door,  
For they like their gardens to look pretty and gay and rival with someone's over the way.

Then there's three more cottages on the other side, they're nice little houses, roofs are of  
thack.

Half a sec', I'll tell you something, the backs in the front and the fronts in the back.  
Then at the end of these lives Mr D Beck, his farm is what you call a smallholding,  
In his fields the hens scratch about and peck and the ducks on a pond are swimming.

Now take with me five minutes walk, by the spinney up to the village top.  
Of the house on the corner you've heard us talk, and at the Gate Inn many travellers stop.  
Also there's four more houses up there, and none of them are very small,  
Now let's walk down Bosworth Road and here we find another farm, it belongs to Mr Wykes  
and I believe, is all.

Now I expect you are tired by this very long tale,  
But to those who can endure it, I hope it's not stale.  
And although our village is not very big, it's a dear little place in which to live,  
And although it is very, very small, it's pleasant and healthy and better than all.

The End.

As a postscript to this feature, John has learned that Ena also  
sadly died in the last week of January.