

Thanks for the Memory

The Duchess of Devonshire

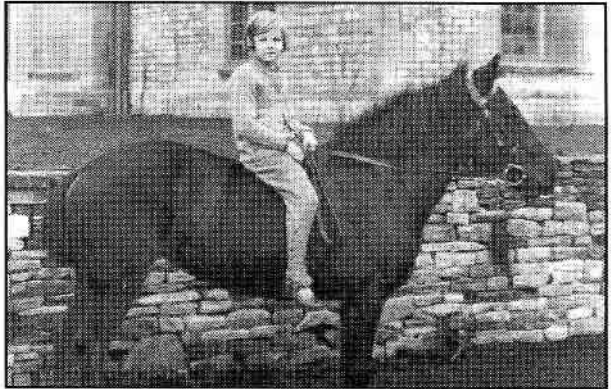
Despite the fact that the Duchess of Devonshire has lived at Chatsworth in Derbyshire for many years, she tells *The Wychwood* of her childhood memories of the area.

When I was 6 years old we moved from Asthal to Swinbrook. The joy of my life was the stables there and my pony, when horses were still used for transport as well as pleasure.

My mother kept free-range chickens. The man in charge was, unbelievably, called Mr Lay. The eggs were sold to London customers and I was allowed to 'help' our groom take them to Shipton station in a float drawn by a trusty vanner called Jack. When we came to the T-junction in Shipton and saw Willis's saddlers' shop we knew we were nearly there.

Past the Shaven Crown was the big shop on the right, where all the heart desired could be bought, and we could see Jack and ourselves mirrored in its windows.

Deborah Devonshire



Right: The Duchess of Devonshire and above Her Grace, aged 8, on her pony in Swinbrook



Picture courtesy of Bridget Framingham

The Duchess of Devonshire is unable to recall the name of 'the shop where all the heart desired could be bought'. If any of our readers can recall its name in 1927, or indeed if you share any other of the Duchesses memories, we would love to hear from you. Do you have a particularly poignant memory of the Wychwoods? Maybe you know someone who has left the area who might supply a short piece for us together with a picture if possible.

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