

Fond farewell

In 1952, Dudley and Edith Hopkins arrived in Shipton-under Wychwood, with their 5 sons; Roger, Martin, Antony, John and David. I was the eldest at 12



The Hopkins family

and David was only a few months old. We came to the village from Farnham in Surrey because Father had recently been made Sales Manager at Charles Early, the blanket makers in Witney. We rented Glebe House next to the old Vicarage.

After 3 years Father became Sales Director at Early's and quite soon afterwards Joint MD. We boys all went to boarding school at Mill Hill in North West London where father had also been educated. In 1959, we moved to Cromwell House which we bought from the Cook family. Cromwell House was a wonderful family home and we all have many happy memories of our time there. Over the years we had numerous large family gatherings and entertained Early's important customers, sometimes from overseas.

My maternal Grandmother, 'Grandma' Berry lived in Box Cottage which she rented from Betty Haynes from the mid sixties until about 1975.

In 1976, Mother and Father sold Cromwell House and moved to Field End on Fiddlers Hill. By then Father had been Chairman of Early's for about 5 years and remained in that position until he retired in 1978. Over the years father was at some time Chairman of both the Playing Field and the Village Hall Committees and he helped organise the original Street Fairs in Church Street in the late fifties and early sixties. In fact, he did as

much as he could considering his very exacting job, which often took him away from home. In addition to his work at Early's he was for some years a member of the CBI Southern Region and a Board

Member of Southern Electricity. In the early eighties he took part in producing the first *Wychwood* magazines. His main responsibility was to sell

the advertising space.

Most sons feel they have the best Mother in the world and that certainly applied to us. She was the kindest nicest person you could wish to meet and she always found time for everyone she knew. It was a very sad day in 1982 when Mum died at just 66-not only for us but for her very many friends. We were very proud, but she would have been thoroughly embarrassed, that some 300 people came to St Mary's Church for the Service of Thanksgiving for her life.

Although Father had a great deal of support and friendship from their many friends in the village, he was very lonely at times and we were all very happy for him when he remarried in 1986. Father's comment was: 'how can anyone be so lucky twice?' Vivien, his new wife, had a home in Oddington and they decided to retain both properties and live a week at a time in each of them. This unusual arrangement worked very well for some 16 years but eventually it became too much for them both, especially as Father is now in his 90th year. Field End was sold at the end of 2002 just over 50 years from when we arrived in the village.

We'd like to say 'thank you Shipton' for having us for 50 years.

Roger Hopkins

Taking leave after 50 years