

Margery, Kelmscott and being 90

Margery Grantham was not born in Kelmscott Manor, but proudly states that she was conceived there. Her father, a serving officer during World War I, had brought his wife and children to his family



home. Father was one of eleven children born and brought up at Kelmscott. Kelmscott Manor had come into the family when Great-Grandfather Hobbs married Elizabeth Turner, but as the family grew, it became too small and was rented to William Morris.

Mushrooms for Breakfast

As the sixth son of the family, Margery's father was sent to London to become a Pedigree Livestock Auctioneer and set up home in Ealing. Every summer Margery and her younger sister spent six weeks staying with the family's old nurse and when it became too much for her, with the cook and her husband, the groom, in their cottage next to the church. Margery remembers idyllic summers enjoying all the freedom that today's children could not begin to dream of. She and her sister would go out early in the morning with the farm pupils to pick mushrooms for breakfast or shoot rabbits for the pot. They played in the river every day, returning home in the evening. There was always something going on, no time to be bored. As the girls grew up, the ready supply of young men, those farm pupils, was an added excitement, but the young lads treated them like their

sisters and always with great respect. Margery remembers seeing May Morris, daughter of William, driving around in a dogcart with her life-long companion Miss Lobb.

Miss Lobb's Language

This Miss Lobb had been employed by Margery's grandfather as a land-girl during the Great War, but had to go when the male farmhands complained about her language!

As a Red Cross volunteer in World War II, Margery helped during the Blitz. She toured the streets of London in a furniture van converted to a mobile First Aid unit. When the Blitz died down in 1942, Margery persuaded her father to allow her to train as a nurse at the Middlesex. She stayed there until her marriage in 1946. Margery and her husband lived in Leatherhead for a number of years before 'retiring' to a village in the Exe Valley in Devon. They moved to Shipton in 1971, living first in Chapel Lane and now in her bungalow, aptly named 'Kelmscott'. Margery's last visit to Kelmscott Manor was to celebrate her cousin Janet's birthday, when the Trustees allowed her to hold her party in the garden. Margery plans to celebrate her 90th birthday with her family - two daughters, five grandchildren and her great-granddaughter Madeleine. We wish her a very happy birthday.

Christine Halliday