

DOP/01/029

Ada Crofts (nee Child) born 1899
5 Magdalen House
Stony Stratford

017 At time of 1st war was married – name was Stanton. Bakers and Confectioners. Corner P in Bakery – at corner of Newport Road and Queen Anne Street. When left school at 13 – went to work for Mr. Stanton - heard he needed a girl. Although she was small she was taken on to serve in shop and help in house, til she was 16. Then wanted to better herself. But in that time he fell in love with her. Went in service as parlour maid. Left to become parlour maid in Northampton. Was going to have double wedding with sister, but lady they were working for said it was unlucky.

046 She was married in May 1909 sister in July. Married at Stanton Low.

053 Father Guest said everybody married at St. James' was living in sin. So she had to get married at Stanton Low. no motor cars so had seven flies, wagonette and brake for guests, then walked along canal path over fields. Church smelt musty. Went home through Haversham and had reception in Assembly Hall (later called Bowyer Hall). Three couples married at Stanton Low. Mrs. Pedder was the first.

083 Ooh he upset the applearth Father Guest did. Her father had been in choir for 44 years – choir and sidesmen left. He was terrible Church empty for some time. She didn't like it was just a lovely service, and he made it more Roman Catholic. Started burning incense. Sister married at St. James' by Bishop of St. Albans – church hadn't been so packed for years.

110 Tall, Irish they say he had dirty habits in the house. He'd take the meat off the butcher and slap pit on the table without a plate or anything. The girl worked there told us that. Her mother was on lot of committees – one was to raise money for a Church Institute – no one knows where that money went after Father Guest come. There was never no Institute built. On Solders and Sailors Committee in Boer War. Father a Governor of Northampton Hospital, Sec. of Ancient Order of Foresters' Sick Club, Sec. of Babies' funeral fund, on Good Samaritan Committee. Dad played violin or games for half hour before the children went to bed – then got on with books. Seven girls and two boys.

154 As children went to Church twice a day. Father Guest said to his parents I shall cool your toes before I go. He meant he'd bury them before he went. But we wouldn't have let him bury them in any case. We'd have had the Rev. Harnett from Wolverton. Always had to be hymns, not songs on Sunday evening around the piano. Thinks a lot were turned away to Chapel when Father Guest was there. The Wylies and Selby's paid for their front seats in Church.

238 Remembers bands coming by in 1913 it was something special you know, we'd never seen anything like it before. Scots in their kilts, Irish all manner of them. All customers and she would go to door of shop to watch them go by. Never visited them at Stacey Hill – too busy in shop.

270 Her brother and three sisters' husbands were in War. Brother Harry was on War work. Her brother and sisters' husband were P.O.W.s Had heard noth8ng of them whether they were dead or alive. Came home from Church one Sunday evening, always had hymns. Had all been singing, with sister playing piano, dad on violin. Knock at front door – can't remember whether Aunt had premonition it was Addys' husband – but that was who it was. He nearly fell in the hall so weak. Of course he give us all a turn when he walked in. A great shock. They told them how they'd been treated (hadn't heard from brother then). Doctor came the next day, Poor b he said When he seen him undressed. He said He's only got a bottom like a babys'. Had to steal potato peelings from pig swill. Her brother watched them feed dry crusts in the rabbit hutches, as soon as the Germans had gone he went and got them. Affected their health afterwards and look how their prisoners were treated in England. It makes you sick.

321 Had baby while he was away. she'd worried so much while he was away presumed killed, that she lost baby and that's the first thing he asked for when he got in Where's baby Addy. So then, course that upset everybody that did. Took a long time to recover. Fed on beat up eggs milk and sherry etc. That's what pulled him round. live got great faith in beat-up eggs. Brother when he came home was puffed up, because of poor diet.

386 Sisters husband came home on leave from France that was when she fell for her baby. Didn't tell them much about France. First baby born in 1910. Effect of war – everybody upset of course, and did all they could to help soldiers and sailors. She used to sing at Mothers Meeting – Nellie Abbey played on the piano.

454 Lost a lot of money on the shop – worked like slaves. Government didn't put subsidy on flour. Lots of debts – had to give up, without a penny in 1916 – when youngest son was born. Felt sorry for husband. His father had big business in Northampton – made all bread for barracks and Northampton Hospital. Her husband got a job with his brother, a baker in Northampton. She went to live with her sister and husband.

Side 2

000 I was an old man's darling first. Husband never said much about war – had been in army – was very quiet. Had contract for pork pies for Social Club in St. Giles Street and for Norman's in Wolverton. Children too small to realise what was going on. Husband upset coming home every weekend to see family, and having to leave. Eventually they got rooms in Northampton at sister-in-law's father. Zeppelins came over then. Went to front door and there was a man lighting a cigarette opposite – told him put that light out you fool. Haven't you heard the warning? – Never answered, but put it out. Children asleep left them in bed. A bomb was dropped some way away. Husband on nights for three years for 6d a night extra.

060 Eventually transferred from Northampton to Wolverton Co-op rented a house in Newport Road.

070 Before war when in business had fairs in Rec. Stayed open till 12 at night – selling ice-cream, lemonade and cups of tea. Cooked dinner for circus men – ate in her kitchen.

090 In Nellie Abbey's pageants. Street parties after the war. Remembers father painting colonies banner for pageant.

150 Sung first solo at age 12 in Newport Workhouse – sand song, lots crying – Daddy – gives verse.

178 Songs Mary of Argyll An old fashioned town, Garden of Happiness Until Where my caravan is rested. Favourite – Mary of Argyll.

240 If everybody had been like some of the people, conscientious objectors, we should have been under the Germans now.

265 Didn't notice change of attitude in brother and brother-in-law after war. Both talked a lot of their P.O.W. experiences. Never grumbled about those who hadn't gone to fight. Her youngest sister was not going to be allowed to go to work but stop and help mother, but had to go and work. Works during war.

340 In Northampton had to get up early to queue for butter etc. Nobody thought the war would last as long as it did.

420 Tells how her dad met her mother.