

Val Relfe

Memories of Living at Bodiam Post Office

I lived at the shop/Post Office from about 1952-56. My grandfather, Percy Morgan, had bought the stores during the 1930s and with the growing popularity of coach trips, he established the tea garden. My mother, Joan, was a reluctant waitress there during school holidays. She struck up a friendship with Mary Past, whose family have been associated with Bodiam Castle for many years.

My mother joined the WAAFs in 1940. In July 1947, she and my father, Frederick McCully, were married at St Giles Church.

My father's mother, Annie, had briefly served as Headmistress at Bodiam School until her early death in February 1937. She is buried in the churchyard.

I used to enjoy playing with the Clout children, who lived next to the shop. Norman Clout looked after the family grave after we moved from Bodiam in 1956 (when my grandfather sold the shop). I was also friendly with Jennifer Johnson, whose parents ran the Castle Inn.

I have very clear memories of looking out of my bedroom window at the shop and watching ladies play stoolball on the Green. I was about 4 or 5 then. I can also remember playing with the Clout children who lived next door. They had a wonderful 'swing boat' in their garden, which Norman, their father, had made from an old pram.

I can remember going to a big party at a hall (in the Castle grounds?) - it may have been for the Coronation and also a fire which broke out in the house next to the Clouts - I think the Suggett family lived there.