

Arrad Foot Residents Contribution:

Wright Greateorex

Contents

Introduction	1
On the Farm	1
Going to School	2
The Village.....	2
Home Comforts	4

Introduction

The article below is taken from a recorded conversation with Wright Greateorex –19 March 2024. The text in brackets is intended to provide context and clarification and was not part of the original recording.

Script Writer: Bryan Edmondson – 2 April 2024

Life in Arrad Foot

My name is Wright Greateorex, my dad and my uncle were both called Wright. My grandparents came to Arrad Foot Farm from Hale Green Farm in Westmorland in 1923, so my family have lived in Arrad Foot for a hundred years, last May. They had seven children, my Dad was ten years old when he came and was seventy years old when he died. He had sixty years at Arrad Foot Farm. I have lived here all my life.

On the Farm



Wright Greateorex Jnr on Ferguson Tractor 1950s

I remember my mother feeding pet lambs in the orchard, feeding them with milk from a bottle. My Grandad died when I was three but I just remember him. He took me to see the baby owls. There is a hole in the apex of the barn wall with a ledge so that the owls could land, and inside there is a big wooden platform (for nesting) and a little opening so that they could get into the barn itself if they wanted to. What they did was lay three eggs, perhaps, and hatch them out, then they would lay another three and the chicks would keep the new eggs warm when the owls needed to be off the nest. So, people looked after nature then, (owls were much valued as a way keeping vermin under control).

I was fifteen when I left school, then I became self-employed. My dad, my uncle Tommy, somebody we had working for us, and then there was me; four of us, milking cows down in the yard before we got the milking parlour up at the top (now used by Arrad Foot Balconies as a workshop). Orchard Cottage (by the farm gate) was our shippon, we had four cows in one bit, twelve in another and a little spot for the stirks - new ones, they weren't calves they were a bit older. We put them in in Autumn and let them out about now (Spring) when the grass was growing.

We had a big milk round in Ulverston and my dad took milk to Barrow for other milkmen to take out. We also took milk kits, (churns) to Greenodd station and they went down Lancashire. The shape of kits was like that (he makes a triangle shape with his hands) so that they wouldn't fall over on the railway. The Co-op in Ulverston bought our milk round, and then the Milk Marketing Board started up and they picked up the milk from the milk stand at your farm, and everybody got the same price so it was a good scheme. These were the new kits - the ordinary ones (with vertical sides).

Going to School

My dad, my auntie Elsie, my auntie Jenny, my auntie Annie, and my uncle Tommy all went to Penny Bridge School. My uncle Dick and uncle Bob were older and became champion Cumberland wrestlers. Dick went to Heversham Grammar School. I don't know why but I went to school in Ulverston. It was nice.

You only went two years, 5-7, at Church Walk, then four years at Lightburn, Sir John Barrow, and then Victoria for four years, then you were fifteen. I liked Geography, Woodwork and Maths but I wasn't very good at English though. I liked History and Science as well. We had an Art class. We did paintings and I had paintings on the wall of the classroom - I was a good drawer you see. I did a lot of drawing, I used to draw Arrad Foot Farm, up the field behind Beckside, I used to draw the house and the field gates.

The Village

Arrad Foot, the village, got its name from Arrad, the big hill that rises up behind the houses. The Armadale was originally known as Arrad Foot House and Doctor Huddleston lived there. After he died the house was empty for a number of years until Mr. Thompson bought it and turned it into the Commercial Hotel in 1935. Then Mr Stoker came in 1939 and changed it into the Armadale Hotel. Maureen and Keith Yates were here for quite a few years, they were from Askam. It must have been the nineties when Frank and Stephanie Gibson came.

We miss the Armadale because you used to be able to go down, have a meal and see people. You don't see anybody now, it's a shame. It was a good stone building. (The Armadale was a

distinctive Victorian building which had been converted into a popular hotel and restaurant standing in attractive gardens at the Ulverston end of the village, just off the A590. Sadly, it has now been demolished).

Brookfield (on the corner by the A590) used to be a barn, there was a shippon underneath and a barn with hay in it. Mr and Mrs. Archer bought it and made it into a house. She used to breed dogs, little black ones, and show them at Crufts.

The Racehorse Inn got its name from horse racing on the marsh (opposite the pub) before the Furness Railway built its line from Plumpton to Greenodd in 1866 and stopped it. (The railway embankment cut off the marsh from the tide and the land was subsequently drained and became productive farmland. The Racehorse building, adjacent to the site of the Armadale, has been converted into a private residence). Stablecroft, the house next to the Racehorse was a barn - there was a stable and the upstairs was full of hay (the pub and small farm was run by the family of Margery Todd, nee Brocklebank, another contributor to the ENMO Heritage Project).

Gawithfield House, (up at the top of the hill through the wood) was the home of Captain and Lady Alice Egerton. Captain Egerton had Wigan Coal and Iron Company so it was quite a big concern. My dad said that he wouldn't have the road tarred up the hill because his horses might slip.

Where Woodlands is now there was a Jinny Ring. The Egertons had racehorses and in the middle of the ring they would have a post with a bar and the horses would run round and round for exercise. The next house up, Windhover, and Fir Bank the one above that, all used to be the kitchen garden for Gawithfield House – where they used to grow all the vegetables - before the houses were built. Beckside (across the road) used to be the Gamekeeper's cottage, and the next two buildings up the hill, The Lodge and The Barn, (incorporating stables and coach house and known locally as the Chutney House) were also Gawithfield properties.

Brodie Kay, a brilliant engineer, made electricity with a water turbine in the wood for Captain and Lady Egerton at Gawithfield, long before anyone had electricity. Gilbert Gilkes and Gordon from Kendal made the turbine. Later, I helped recover the turbine and its now in the museum at Kendal. There was a little brick building, - it's still there - then electric poles going up through the wood, across the road opposite and then up the garden to the house. There was a dam at the back of The Brow, with a big black pipe with a wheel on top of it, then, just behind the powerhouse there's another wheel. They cut through the rock to get the pipe down.

Brodie Kay owned the Esso garage at Greenodd and lived at Brookside (by the junction in the middle of the village. At this point Wright produces a hand drawn map showing a timber garage situated alongside the stream in the back garden at Brookside, accessed via an opening in the wall opposite the current post box). The garage was half of a first world war army hut. The other half of the army hut was put on land at the east side of the village and became Mrs. Bufford's house. It was a proper hut and she lived in it. Then Williamson's bought it, pulled it down and built the Orchard bungalow.

Brodie had a Rolls-Royce with dickie seats, you could open the back and it had two more seats in it - it didn't have a roof on it.

We had a car, an Austin and a Ford van... Oh, and Captain Egerton, after they got rid of the horses, they got the road done properly (tarred) and they got a Rolls-Royce.

Brodie Kay used to take Lady Egerton in the Rolls-Royce and go to France and Europe and bring all these exotic plants back.

On the 1923 photo of Arrad Foot there are no trees (in the Brookside garden) – the Ginko trees weren't there and the Tulip tree isn't there (they are all now mature specimens). I think they must have brought them back and planted them there. He used to Chauffeur her, Lady Edgerton.

Brodie's neighbour at that time was Edward Thompson who had a wagon and hauled straw and that sort of thing - a haulage contractor. Then Stubbs, builders from Urswick bought the two cottages and made it all into one... put one big roof on because they had two separate roofs.

Mr and Mrs. Herst lived in Oakdene with Jean and her brother Peter, then they moved up the hill when the Sproat's cottage (The Brow) became available (and the Bibbys moved into Oakdene).

Mrs. Bibby was a good photographer and also painted colours onto black and white pictures...she coloured my parents wedding photo. She also made hats. She used to come to our orchard and collect feathers - because we had ducks and geese and hens, and she used to dye the feathers and make her hats. She was on television once – on this programme with her hats.

Ken and Mary Higgs lived here quite a long time (at Glenside). It was a tied cottage to Plumpton Cottage Farm where Ken worked (and they raised their family there).

There are some very old trees. The oak tree at the bottom of the hill is twenty- two feet around the trunk and Arthur Evans, of the Evening Mail, said it was over two hundred years old.

Home Comforts

Arrad Foot was quiet. The Co-op bread van came on Monday and Friday, the Co-op mobile shop on Wednesday, Hutchinson's Butchers on Tuesday and Friday, and Mr. Teasdale – fish, fruit and veg. also on Friday. Electric didn't come to the village until 1949 and we didn't get mains water until 1972. So, we had all dry toilets - earth toilets. Rock Cottage's was right up at the top of the garden, Oakdene's was right up by the wall and the Wilson's was up at the top of the lane - but that was for three cottages. Council men used to come with wheelbarrows up the lane to empty all the toilets.

You see the village pump (still visible opposite the post box). We had a well in the back yard, Margery at the Racehorse, had one in the back kitchen, Bibby's had one; and Beckside. Gawithfield barn had a well for the horses in the yard. Our well was about twenty feet deep. It had a clack (a valve at the bottom of the pipe) and sometimes it wouldn't hold water so we had to lift it out and hook it on the bedroom window - it was so long. My dad would put a new clack in and when you started pumping water it would open and when you stopped it would hold the water in the pipe. Nice and cold it was.

We wanted a milking parlour at the farm but we had no water supply. The water came out of Ulverston but only as far as Tebay Lane. So, they made a six-inch main all along the side of the road, opposite Newland Garage, right along to the Armadale then right up the road as far

as Gawithfield back gate. The Council, the Farmers Union, (and others) there was about three or four amalgamated so that one group didn't pay for it all.

There was a septic tank in Margery's field and the sewer came up as far as Bibby's, they were connected to it. The Council used to send a tanker to put a pipe down the field and clean it out. The Armadale had a septic tank near Brookfield. So, everyone got bathrooms and toilets when the water came...and we got our milking parlour.



Wright Greatorex Snr with bull in beck



*Greatorex family with prize bull
after Lowick Show 1960*