

Recollections of Growing Up in the Brighton Triangle Area' 1959 – 1971

by

Hugh Hazelton

Just A Little About Me:

I am Hugh Hazelton, but was born Terence Hugh Ritchie, in the County of Middlesex in May 1953. After living for some time at Kenley in north Surrey I moved to 21 St. Paul's Street, Brighton in July of 1959 when I was six years old, and lived there until the end of August 1971 when I was 18 years of age. These are my memories and recollections of life in the immediate area during those twelve years. Although generally fairly reliable my memory is not infallible, and so the facts I present here although given to the best of my recollection cannot be taken as definitive. Some recollections are obviously clearer than others. Some house numbers of neighbours I can recall with certainty, others not at all, merely the general part of particular streets. Obviously too most of the families I knew well were those who had children of similar age to myself, apart that is from very near neighbours. During my time of growing up in St. Paul's Street I was known locally as 'Terry', 'Terry Ritchie' or 'Tezz'. I briefly attended St. Martin's School, then Fairlight School in St. Leonard's Road and finally Queens Park Secondary. I moved to the County of Norfolk in 1971 where I still reside. I have been married for 25 years to a lady from Kent whom I first met in Norfolk in 1976 and have one daughter who was born in 1992.

I will try to set out my recollections in some kind of logical system going by street location.

21 St. Paul's Street, Brighton:

21 St. Paul's Street was a former bakery located on the corner of St. Paul's Street and Park Crescent Road. In July 1959 when my parents took it on a twelve year lease at a fixed rent of £150 per annum it was operating as a general grocers, tobacconists and confectioners. The original owners (landlords) were a company called Meal Services Ltd. Later the ownership passed to a company called Curzon Property Trust, and finally (c. 1969) to a private landlord named Mr Franks. The outgoing tenants in July 1959 were a married couple named Finch. As far as I know the last person to operate the premises as a working bakery had been a man named Hawkins. I think that baking operations ceased c. 1949, but stand to be corrected on that date if anyone knows better.

During the time I lived there the structural condition of the premises known as 21 St. Paul's Street was very poor. A new tiled roof - one of the first in the area - had been fitted shortly before my parents moved in, but otherwise the interior was in a very bad state with severe rising damp, poor electrics (with disused gas piping still in situ) and foul drains very prone to 'blocking back' in the Park Crescent Road part of the basement. The windows, doors etc. which were all the Victorian originals were likewise all in a very bad state. The old bakery ovens etc. were all still in situ in the basement, running under the small brick surfaced yard at the rear. There were also derelict wooden dough troughs and paddles, long rusty four wheeled iron trolleys which had been used to load bread into the ovens with, and literally dozens of white Bakelite trays lying about down there. I cannot remember the oven maker's name which was cast onto the iron oven doors, but the address was in Patcham. The rear part of the basement floor was still then in the original stone sets, whilst the front part had been much more recently concreted over. Much of the rear yard had been roofed over

with rusty and holed corrugated iron sheets and there was a single large wooden gate which opened onto St. Paul's Street. An iron girder had at some time been cemented across the tops of the two brick piers which supported this gate, and this in turn somewhat precariously supported a tiny first floor lean-to extension housing a porcelain toilet with a wide bare wooden seat, which one entered from inside via a doorway in what had formerly been a landing window. This 'improvement' dated from the 1930's I believe. There was also a large white tiled heat vent above the oven area which was enclosed on the yard side by a rotting wood and glass construction rather like an out-sized cold frame, and which would open up. Only a couple of months after our arrival most of the glass got smashed when much of the cast iron guttering across the rear eaves of the building suddenly and without any warning came crashing down on top of it.

Up in the shop there was a modernish marble topped cream metal counter, scales, new metal display shelves, and an aged cash register. The rest of the premises consisted of a small and dingy little back room (window to yard) behind the shop, a tiny kitchen (window to Park Crescent Road) with a deep stone sink and a very aged Ascot gas water heater, plus two small bedrooms and a crudely partitioned off bathroom with basin upstairs. The shop room alone still retained its original heavily patterned embossed Victorian ceiling paper of a type known as lincrusta I believe. There were glass advertising panels attached to the shop windows promoting everything from Typhoo tea to Player's cigarettes, and an electric bell set to ring when customers stepped across the shop door floor mat. During the time of my occupation the exterior walls of the building were finished in a pale primrose yellow colour, with window frames, doors, guttering and downpipes etc. all painted light blue. My father's 1955 Standard Ten saloon (Reg. No. VKX 682) used to be parked up on the Park Crescent Road part of the frontage.

During the time my parents ran the shop (until mid 1962) Miller's pies (green Morris minor van) Harrington's bread (old side valve Ford 10 cwt. Van, the driver's name was Frank) Wall's sausages, Smith's crisps, Batchelor's tinned peas, Brooke Bond tea (bright red three cylinder diesel Trojan van) etc., etc., were all individually delivered for retailing. The two main Brighton wholesalers my parents did business with were Gravitt and Dockrell (whose delivery vehicle was a khaki ex-army Bedford 3 tonner) and Collins and Aldridge.

It had been my parent's intention for my late mother Dorothea Betty Ritchie *nee* Hazelton (known as Betty) to run the shop side of things whilst my father started up a light engineering business in the basement. In the event the shop business failed completely by mid 1962 - small corner shops were on the way out even then - and sadly my mother then died in the October of 1963. Whilst living at No. 21 I attended St. Martin's School for a very short time, then the Fairlight School in St. Leonard's Road - infants and juniors - and finally Queen's Park Secondary until 1970. My first job was as a junior clerk with East Sussex County Council Health Department at County Hall, Lewes, 1970-1971. In my late teens I developed what has become a life long interest in the antique trade, and before leaving Brighton I had quite a lot to do with the antique dealers in The Laines and Kensington Gardens areas etc., an activity which my late father heartily and very vociferously disapproved of.

St. Paul's Street, south side:

On the corner of St. Paul's Street and Upper Lewes Road was a large corner shop. Until about 1962 this was run by a family named Batchelor who had at least two sons both older than myself Two elderly ladies then took over these premises - basically a general grocer's - for a time. Certainly spinsters, they may also have been sisters. I cannot recall a name. Another elderly couple followed, then about 1967 this shop was converted into a mini supermarket by a couple named Cyril and Ivy although I cannot now remember their surname. A lady named Eileen Holter (or possibly Holder)

who lived in Round Hill Crescent and had a 10 year old son named Tim worked for them there for a while. Ivy and Cyril did not live on the premises as previous occupants had done, and so rented the residential part out. One time I was shown some old shop bags which had been unearthed in those premises. Probably dating from the turn of the last century (i.e. c. 1900) they showed an engraved view of the shop front with a horse and phaeton passing with - from 40 years old memory I have to caution - the name 'Thomas Apps' and 'Tea Merchant' depicted.

Moving down the south side of St. Paul's Street, the end building of the terrace opposite to No. 21 was a narrow former stables no more than five feet in width if that. At various times it was rented out for short periods by different persons for use as a workshop, including T.V. repairs, and rather more surprisingly, for car body welding. It was also frequently broken into by dossers and the like, and from about 1969 its doors and windows were permanently sealed with cemented building blocks.

The end house, No. 20 St. Paul's Street, was occupied by a widower named Albert (I think) Smith. Mr Smith's daughter Shirley, married name Mrs Davidson, lived in Park Crescent Road.

No. 19 was occupied by a large and mostly all female family named Hope. Mrs Hope was latterly largely housebound and would sometimes call us kids over to her basement grating to run errands to local shops etc. She would unfailingly reward anyone with tuppence. She had two adult daughters with about a decade in age between them, Betty and Pam. The younger sister Pam had herself two daughters - Cheryl who was slightly younger than myself, and somewhat younger Lesley. I recall Pam Hope in particular as being a particularly friendly and cheerful neighbour, although much the same could be said for all of that family. There was another young lady I remember there some of the time too, Carol Hope, and a young cousin as I think he was of this family who frequently visited, and was well known to us other kids in the street. His name was Roy Hope. There was also a well known at the time Brighton rag and bone whose name was Mr Mitchell, and who even into the latter sixties used to make rounds in the area with a horse and cart. Forty years and more on I may have my facts wrong here, but I *think* this man had some family connection to the Hopes.

No. 18 was the home of a family named Luxford. Mr Luxford 'Eddie' (short for Edmund I think) worked at Alan West's factory up the Lewes Road. Mrs Luxford's name was Elizabeth. There were three sons, Robert (Bob), John, and Derek. Bob Luxford around about 1962 rented the former stables on the end of the terrace for a time in connection with a T.V. repair and ariel installation business he had at the time. John Luxford whom I knew the best of the three was a red head, and was very keen on keeping and breeding caged birds. In the very late '60's he had numerous aviaries set up in No. 18's back yard. The youngest brother Derek who was about 18 months younger than myself attended the Brighton Secondary Technical School I think.

Moving down the south side of St. Paul's Street No. 9 was occupied by Mrs Simmons (or Symonds)

No. 8 was for a time until about 1965 the home of a family named either Morris or Morrison. There were two brothers named Glen and Neil, both a little older than myself. Round about 1959/60 this household possessed an old motor-cycle combination - a Yorkshire built Phelan and Moore Panther with a Canterbury double adult sidecar I believe - and on Sunday mornings in summer they would all ride off on it/in it for a day in the country. The very distinctive sound of this large capacity long stroke single cylinder machine slowly making its way up the street was one to be savored!

Also down near the 'kink' there was an old shop run by a very elderly couple as a shoe repairer's. This business however closed down c. 1961 and the shop never to my knowledge re-opened.

Near here lived a family who *may* have been named Harman, and had a daughter and two sons, the younger of whom was named Keith, and the elder just possibly Michael (Mikey). However, I may

be totally confusing names here with another family who lived on the opposite side. The lad Keith I knew certainly went to Fairlight, and was a couple of years older than myself.

Further down lived a girl named Christine who wore glasses, and who was in the same class as myself at Fairlight Infants School (Mrs West's) and certainly also had a younger brother. However, try as I might I just cannot recall a surname for this family.

Near to the bottom on that side lived a blonde haired lady whose name I regret I again just cannot recall, but she had a son named Barry, and possibly too a daughter named Tina. This lady was I believe a friend of a one time Brighton councilor for the ward (c. 1970) Mrs Mary Mack.

At the bottom corner with the Lewes Road was a butcher's shop. The name above the windows read 'Smith's' but the family who ran it were, I am fairly certain, named Sharp.

St. Paul's Street, north side:

The corner shop on that side at the junction with the Upper Lewes Road was a sweet shop owned by a family named Cripps. It was always known locally as 'Mrs Cripps's' (*sic*). About 1963 however the Cripps family let it out to a family named Miles whom I think had formerly run a cafe business at Newhaven. Mr and Mrs Miles had one daughter, Linda, who became married to John Luxford from 18 St. Paul's Street although, I believe they later divorced. At some time Mr Miles installed a hot peanut dispenser in the shop. I think a bag of very hot peanuts from it cost 6d. Sales of these nuts outstripped sweets for a short time! Mr and Mrs Miles also owned a small black French poodle dog which he used to walk down St. Paul's Street and back at around tea time most days. I cannot be certain at this distance in time, but I think the animal's name was Nero. Mr Miles in particular was certainly very fond of it. In mid 1971, and shortly before I left the area, the Miles family also departed and Mrs Cripps returned once more to serve behind the counter there.

House numbers on that side I cannot recall with any certainty, but in roughly the right order going from the top down some of the households were:

The O'Leary family. Mr O'Leary was as the name suggests and Irishman. I think there were four daughters, though three might be correct, in this family. I think the eldest was Heather, followed by Linda certainly, and then Colleen who like myself also attended Queens Park school. They may have had a younger sister too, but if so I regret I cannot recall a name for her.

The Mason family. Mrs Ruby Mason was an Indian lady. She lived with her two sons, Michael and John, and daughter Valerie. Michael upon leaving school joined the army and was I believe for a while stationed at Brighton barracks. John Mason attended the Fawcett School in York Place, and I think left the area c. 1970 upon his marriage. Round about 1959/60 this family - I do well recall! - possessed a black and white collie dog called Ricky.

A little further down towards the Park Crescent Road junction lived a family named Tree. Mrs Tree - forename Dorothy possibly? - worked at one of the night clubs down near The Steine. There was one grown up son, Tony, and I *think* three daughters named Pat, Christine, and Linda. I am racking memory to the absolute limit here, but I think c. 1967 Christine Tree married a man named Colin who at that time was a photographer with the Brighton Evening Argus newspaper.

Spencer Family. Mr and Mrs Spencer had I think three married daughters who had left home. One was named Christine certainly and she and her husband had a son Neil. Another daughter may have been named Maureen. Still living at the house was a lad named Adrian, whom I think was Mr and

Mrs Spencer's grandson.

Opposite Park Crescent Road lived Mrs Ghyll, an old lady, who for a time at least had a teenaged granddaughter, Carol, living there too.

A little further down lived a family named Rodrigues. Mr Frank Rodrigues I remember as a special friend. A physically large but extremely pleasant man, Mr Rodrigues was I believe part Portuguese and part Indian, and may have come originally from the Portuguese enclave of Goa (though I stand to be corrected on that!). Frank Rodrigues extended particular kindness to myself when my mother died in 1963 (I was then just ten years old) and continued to be a good friend until I moved away. Frank's familiar greeting, which I can still clearly recall even now, was: "Hey, Terry! An' 'ow are you?" His wife Mrs Rodrigues was an Indian lady and did not mix with the neighbours very much. There were four daughters, all of them extremely well brought up girls, but I can recall only one of their names now, that being Kathleen whom I think was the youngest.

Near to them lived for a time a family I think named Hannan or Harper (but I may be confusing that name with a different family entirely who lived opposite as previously stated) who had children, one of whom was a daughter possibly named Lynn, plus a younger boy.

Mrs Hill, to about 1960. Had several small children, and habitually used push at least three of them around in the same pram all at the same time.

Moving down, there was old Mrs Beumont who had a son Michael, and a younger one whose name I cannot now recall.

Mr and Mrs Richardson had an elder of two (I think) daughters named Beverley who was in the same class as myself at Fairlight Infants (Mrs West's). I think this family moved away in the early to mid 1960's.

The Chapman family. A large household with one older lad I remember named Peter.

Mrs Wheeler, who had a daughter Sheila. Sheila, a tall girl about five years older than myself, was I recall a slight cripple and walked with a noticeable limp.

Mrs Atte11, who had a daughter Angela. Angela Attrell - a very pretty girl I recall - was about six years my senior, and as a mid-teen used to tease me ruthlessly when she came into the shop to buy sweets etc. with greetings like: "Hello, my darling!" I was then only about 6 or 7 years old, and used to get painfully embarrassed, although I'm sure I secretly enjoyed such attention!

At the bottom of St. Paul's Street on that side lived a family named Johnson. The two sons, Derek and Ian, both attended Fairlight School at the same time as myself.

On the bottom corner was a shop which I *think* was a cafe run by a family named Martin or Marten. However, there was also a hardware store somewhere down there too back then. Memory is a little unclear here.

Park Crescent Road, west side:

Adjacent to No. 21 St. Paul's Street was 37 or 38 Park Crescent Road. For the entire twelve years I lived at No. 21 this house was occupied by an elderly spinster lady, Miss Queenie Burgess, although she actually occupied the basement rooms only with the remainder of the house standing completely

bare and empty. Small and slight of build, and habitually dressed in black, Miss Burgess was a devout Catholic and I believe heard mass on a daily basis at nearby St. Martin's church. By the time we left in 1971 she was 88 years old and still living alone despite probably suffering from dementia and tinnitus by then - no social services in those days sadly. Although she had a reputation of being quite hostile towards local children, I was as a youngster a couple of times invited into her basement rooms. She kept there two caged budgerigars as pets, and old blue one called Peter, and a younger green one she'd named Joey. Quite convinced that both of these birds could talk (they couldn't!) she nevertheless found an unlikely ally in myself when aged about six I publicly attested to a shop full of neighbours that I had indeed heard both of them talking when I'd visited - oh the innocence of childhood! I remember Miss Burgess once stating that St. Paul's Street had been built first, then Park Crescent Road. I also recall her once talking about her father who long before had either been a soldier based at Brighton barracks, or had had some trade connection with the place, and that the soldiers there had once given him a large dog. I believe that Miss Queenie Burgess had been living at No. 37/8 Park Crescent Road since the 1920's or possibly even earlier.

Next door to Miss Burgess, No. 36 or 37, lived a late middle aged childless couple named Gibbs.

At No. 35 lived the Martin family. Mr Percy Martin was a Brighton man I think, but his wife Sadie was certainly Scottish, possibly Glaswegian. They had two sons, David and Graham. David Martin was pretty much my best mate in the area when I was growing up there. He would have been about eighteen months my junior, attended St. Martin's primary school, and then the Moulscombe School. I think from memory he went into the butchery trade in adult life. The two boys used to keep white rabbits in a hutch in their back yard, and young David and myself used to hang about together quite a lot, although we tended to drift apart a bit once we were at different secondary schools. I can still recall attending David Martin's probably sixth birthday party in 1960 in the basement room of No. 35 even now! About 1962 the Martin family acquired a car which was then parked outside their front, being one of the first families in the road to do so. The vehicle was if I remember rightly a two tone blue Hillman Minx saloon of about 1955 vintage.

No. 36 was occupied by an elderly couple named Halls. Sad to recount, Mr Halls died of a sudden heart attack in his kitchen early one morning in September 1970.

Moving further down the west side of Park Crescent Road there was a family named Fairclough (or similar) who had two young sons. The elder I think was named Eugene, the younger possibly Gary, but I may be wrong with that name.

Mr and Mrs Davidson nearby had two children, Michael and Anne. Mrs Davidson whose forename was Shirley was the daughter of Mr Albert Smith who lived at No. 20 St. Paul's Street. On one occasion during the hard winter of 1962/3 and with snow on the ground I locked myself out of No. 21 when both my parents were away for the day. Mrs Shirley Davidson it was who took me back to her house until my father arrived home several hours later – an act of kindness which even at this distance in time is worth recording here I think. I was just eight years old at the time, but my father blamed me entirely for the episode and I was hit as soon as we got home.

Either next door or very close to the Davidson household lived another family whose name if I ever knew it I cannot recall now, but I do recall that c. 1960 they were one of the few in the road to own a car, and that it was a c. 1938 four door Morris Eight saloon. Some of us kids sometimes used to get to play 'driving' in it!

Also in this general area c. 1961 lived two young brothers, whom I can remember only as Mark and Vicky (presumably short for Victor?).

Mrs Farrant lived in that part of the road too, I think with her daughter – married name O'Shea – and

her husband either next door, or sharing the same address. There was one young lad there, Michael O'Shea.

A little further down (I think!) were to be found the Perkins family who arrived about 1962. Mr and Mrs Perkins were Londoners and Mr Perkins worked in the motor trade, I believe (though I stand to be corrected) being a partner in a garage business based out near Hassocks somewhere. They had two daughters, Irene and Pauline, and a younger son, Michael. When aged 9 or 10 I had my first ever 'date' with Irene Perkins (then aged about 11) when the pair of us took ourselves off down to the seafront one summer Saturday afternoon and enjoyed ourselves on the rides and amusements on the Palace Pier. There was more freedom for children in those days than now I think! Younger sister Pauline I recall worked for a time in Boots the Chemist in London Road after finishing school.

Further still down Park Crescent Road on that side was a family named Woolf with several children one of whom was a lad named John.

The Hillman family also down at that end of the road had two children, a daughter whose name I cannot recall and a son David who was a couple of years older than myself Mrs Hillman for a time I think worked in a rather old fashioned green grocer's shop located at the bottom of St. Mary Madelaine Street at its junction with the Lewes Road.

A girl whom I knew in the same class as myself at Fairlight, Linda Griffiths, I believe lived at this end of Park Crescent Road for a time too (c. 1964).

Also a little lad named Raymond I knew lived at this end of the road, c. 1960.

At the very end on that side was a red painted corner shop. The proprietor's of this may have been named Nealgrove, although that name might have applied to another small shop just down on Park Crescent Place near to the garages where Campling's Coaches were housed. There was some small excitement one Saturday c. 1960 when this shop at the end of Park Crescent Road caught fire and the Fire Brigade attended. I don't think damage was that serious, although I do recall Mr Nealgrove as I think he was throwing an old coat over his head and making a determined dash inside to rescue the till!

Park Crescent Road, east side:

Opposite to No. 21 stood 38 (I think — it was the end of terrace house anyway) Park Crescent Road. This property was the home of the Rodgers family. Mr Rodgers was English, but Mrs Rodgers whose name I think I recall as being Bianca, was Italian. They had two daughters, Mary and Anna, both a little older than myself In their ground floor front room they had a piano, and I believe both girls took piano lessons. I can also recall Anna talking about a family holiday in Italy at such times when foreign travel was not as common an activity as it has since become! Sometime during the mid '60's Anna was involved in a road traffic accident on the Lewes Road when she came off the pillion of a motor scooter following a collision of some sort. Such was the degree of community spirit back then that numerous neighbours went rushing straight down there as soon as the news was received, to find an understandably distraught Mr Rodgers cradling his daughter in the middle of the road whilst police officers halted traffic to enable an ambulance to reach the scene. Happy to relate young Anna was not seriously hurt.

Near to the end of the terrace, about No. 40 or 41, lived an elderly spinster, Miss Lily Head.

Further down in a dark blue fronted house lived the Woolvin family. Mr Woolvin I think was a

taxi driver. There were four sons in this family that I recall: Brian, Clive, Derek, and Paul. Mrs Woolvin I believe kept ducks in their back garden for a while. One time (c. 1964) I remember the three younger brothers of this family putting on a show with a small glove puppet theatre in their hallway with an audience of around ten kids crowded round the front door watching. Paul Woolvin caused considerable pride in the street when c. 1966 he won himself a place at grammar school, Varndean I think.

Nearby lived a family whose name I think was Reynolds. Mrs Reynolds had a dark green sports car, possibly an M.G. Midget, which was a little unusual in the area at that time! (c. 1961.) There was one daughter, a quiet and rather nice little girl called Deborah, whom I recall being there for a time.

Further down c. 1965 lived for a while a young couple named I think Staley (not certain of the right spelling I'm afraid). They had one very young son whose christian name I am fairly sure was Brett.

Considerably further down in 1959 lived a very old couple, Mr and Mrs Gander.

Also towards the farther end on this east side lived a family named Whiteman who had at least one child, a boy I knew named John.

(N.B. I read with interest the piece by Mr and Mrs Knight on the website, but I cannot recall at all a sweet shop at No. 60 Park Crescent Road. I can only assume this had ceased trading by 1959.)

Upper Lewes Road, east side:

At No. 91 Upper Lewes Road, far along in the Aberdeen - Inverness Road area - lived Mr and Mrs Denyer with their two sons Keith and Glen. Keith Denyer I knew extremely well both at Fairlight, but more particularly at Queens Park School which we both attended in the same year group. Very keen on scouting, Keith Denyer had a great deal of involvement with the 56th Brighton 'St. Savior's' troop based in the now I believe demolished St. Savior's church crypt up on the Ditchling Road. He and I also used to ride out of Brighton on our bikes along with two other QP lads, David Maplesden who lived at Belle Vue up near the race course, and Michael Salter whom I believe lived somewhere in the Wakefield Road/Richmond Road areas, for the purpose of brass rubbing in Sussex churches which was a quite popular hobby back in the 1960's. If I recall correctly I think the Denyer family moved to Whitehawk c. 1967.

Also in this general area - possibly on the south corner with Edinburgh Road? - there was a corner retail premises run as a fish and chip shop by a family of Italians I think. Battered cod would be 1/- or is 2d depending upon size. Locally caught huss 9d. Chips 6d. Thus: "Six o' chips, please!" or "Huss and six!" And all served up in re-cycled newspaper.

Also somewhere in this vicinity lived a lad named Jefferey Gardiner who attended Fairlight school.

A few doors around the corner from the top of St. Paul's Street going south lived a family named Greenfield. Mrs Greenfield I think I remember worked for some years in the tobacco kiosk in the Lewes Road Co-op store. They had just one son, John, who by a remarkable co-incidence was already working at East Sussex County Council Health Department when I started there in September 1970. At that time John Greenfield had an old 650cc A.J.S. motorcycle which he used to park up under a plastic sheet outside No. 21's front door, although this later got replaced with a very secondhand side valve engined Reliant three wheeler which he turned onto its side with me in the passenger seat at the bottom of Lewes High Street ...! John Greenfield had previously attended the private Xavarian College with their distinctive maroon red uniforms located off Tower Road above

Queens Park close to the distinctive Pepper Pot'.

Close by lived Mr and Mrs Tully (or Tulley?) who had a son John, and a younger girl whose name I cannot now recall. John Tully was a little younger than myself and went to Fairlight school.

Further along towards the Rose Hill junction I think there lived a family named Paine (or Payne?) whose daughter Janet was in the same class as myself at Fairlight School.

On the short stretch of Upper Lewes Road between St. Paul's Street and St. Mary Magdelaine Street memory has it that there were two shops: One of these was a greengrocer's run by a family named Parsons. The other I think a sweet shop etc. run for part of the time I was there at least by a family named O'Conner, who had at least one son named Stuart.

Upper Lewes Road, west side:

No. 29 Upper Lewes Road was the home of the Robinson family who had two sons, Graham and Kelvin. Kelvin Robinson was the same age as myself and we were good friends at Fairlight. I think he subsequently had a career in the police, but I may be wrong on that point. I do recall the house had a name board reading 'Kel-Gra' hanging up above its front door. The elder brother Graham I seem to recall had the nickname of Puck'. Kelvin Robinson I *think* went to the old Patcham School after leaving Fairlight, about a year only before it became merged into the new Patcham-Fawcett.

Round Hill Crescent:

At No. 27 Round Hill Crescent lived a lad named John Mercer whom I was friends with at Fairlight School infants.

Other school mates I recall living in that crescent were John Bath, Stephen Kraft (who certainly had a younger sister, just possibly named Susan?) John Young, and Mary Farrow whom I sat next to in Fairlight Juniors class 2 (Miss Seaman's). And she had an elder brother for whom I cannot recount a name. I also think that a family named Fogden lived in the area at the time, if not in Round Hill Crescent then in a street nearby. A brother and sister with the girl being the elder? I think the boy's name might have been Robert.

The previously mentioned Mrs Eileen Holter, or Holder, and her son Tim also lived in Round Hill Crescent c. 1968 on.

Two brothers, David and Edward Mason - as far as I know unrelated to the Mason family living in St. Paul's Street - also lived further up in Round Hill Crescent for some years.

Another lad I recall from the early 1960's, and slightly older than myself, who lived somewhere on Round Hill Crescent was named John Young.

In a house by the foot of the Cat's Creep lived an old lady, Mrs Back being her name possibly?

Up until about 1961 a very elderly gent, Mr Gunn, lived up on Round Hill Crescent too. He used to like to offer to oil the wheels of us kids' scooters etc. from an old oil can he carried around in a coat pocket. He also once gave me an old book - possibly a Capt. W.E. Johns 'Biggles' novel I think.

In the large detached house at the very foot of Round Hill Crescent (north corner) lived until 1971 Mrs Doris Harrington, who was the widow of a local businessman who *might* have had connections to Col. Harrington of the Brighton bakery of that name.

St. Mary Magdelaine Street:

On the north side of this road near the Upper Lewes Road corner there lived for a time a lad named Trevor Evans whom I was friends with at QP school. I think he left c. 1966.

Also in this street, though I cannot now recall where exactly, lived a lad named Lawrence Pococke. His uncle, also of that same surname, was 'skipper' of the 28th Brighton 'Fairlight' Cub Scouts troop (colours navy blue/sky blue) which met every Thursday evening at the Fairlight School. This Mr Pococke at the time I well remember drove a pale blue Heinkel bubble car. In early 1963 however the 28th troop was very suddenly disbanded without even letters to parents, and the lads belonging to it were impressed into the Brighton 56th 'St. Saviors' troop (colours red/white) based at St. Savior's church crypt up on the Ditchling Road.

A lad called Michael Meechan I *think* lived in this street (or nearby). He had a cousin I think, Janice Meechan who lived near the Fairlight School, and whom I knew slightly as a fellow pupil at Queens Park school.

There was a very old fashioned greengrocer's with a bare wooden floor and potatoes, carrots, etc. all lying about in sacks located I think on the southern corner of this street with the Lewes Road. Mrs Hillman from Park Crescent Road I think worked there at one time.

Caledonian Road:

At No. 22 lived a family named Ford whose son Phillip I knew at Fairlight Infants 1959/60. Either this house or another close by had a sign reading 'No Hawkers' attached to its front railing. To kids Who didn't understand the intended meaning, this seemed a strange name indeed to give a house ...

On the north side and roughly mid-way down was a dairy and milk depot. I think from memory that this was United Dairies, but I may have that wrong. Local milk deliveries went out from this depot around the area. I remember in the earlier years that I lived at No. 21 that the floats were very small electrically propelled four wheelers with tiny wheels, and that the milkman who all wore white coats and peaked caps walked ahead of them holding a long steering tiller. Glass one pint milk bottles with silver foil caps were on one side, rattling crates of the picked up empties on the other.

On the southern corner of this street with the Lewes Road there was a bank.

St. Martin's Street:

This street was very narrow with a tight right angled turn to the left where St. Martin's School stood. I think the north-south part of the street from that point was Brewer Street. I attended St. Martin's School for half a term only from September 1959. The infant school head mistress I recall as Mrs or Miss Baker: The teacher I had was a tall, slender, and quite young lady, Miss Anderson. Two others were Mrs Clarke who was very old, and Mrs Hatman whom I believe taught the youngest

children. On Thursday mornings Mrs Baker would march the entire infants school in a crocodile fashion down a small alley way with cast iron bollards at each end to attend morning mass at St. Martin's church. The cavernous red/brown brick interior of that building was quite intimidating to a six year old! I think that parts of the litany in those days were given in Latin. A few names I recall from that school from 1959: Tony Grant; John Paise (not certain of the spelling); Derek Cruikshank; Billy Smith; John Lyon; Tony Gillan; John Honeysuckle; Derek Reynolds; Ian Netley. The last mentioned name also went onto Queens Park as myself, and 38 years on I met up with Mr Netley at a QP school reunion in February 2005.

Park Crescent Terrace:

Round about No. 44 I think lived a family named Nutley with three siblings named Susan, John, and Philip. John Nutley I knew well at Fairlight. He was incredibly bright, and I believe he went on to Westlaine School. Philip Nutley who would have been a couple of years younger than myself went to QP school.

Nearby was the overgrown bomb site in Park Crescent, which I don't believe got redeveloped until after I'd left the area. More or less opposite to that were the garages of Campling's Coaches, and I think from memory two small mid-terrace shops. One I think was a grocer's/confectioners run by a quite elderly man. The other I seem to recall was for a time at least (c. 1968) a lady's hairdresser's with large monochrome photos of typical '60's models propped up behind rather grubby windows.

Far down on the right hand side of Park Crescent Terrace approaching The Levels stood the large Salvation Army Citadel behind its high, black painted iron railings and walls.

Going the other way, at the foot of Rose Hill stood some white and green painted flats with a white wall and locked iron gate in front of them, Devonian Court. A relation of a 'Triangle' lady not to be identified by name - but see final paragraph! - had a flat here throughout the 1960's. I believe it was also said that this site had formerly housed a mineral water works and prior to that a Theatre possibly named the Gaiety (not to be confused with the Gaiety Cinema beyond the far end of the Upper Lewes Road).

Lewes Road:

There were of course numerous shops on this road. Of most interest to a youngster as I then was were toy shops, and there were essentially three of these: Up near the Hartington Road junction was to be found Trotman's. This shop was quite large and deep, with double fronted windows with red painted frames separated by a deep display windowed tunnel that led to the front door. Its proprietor was an amiable late middle aged gentleman named Jack Trotman, who was either a former boxer or who had strong connections with that sport. Mr Trotman's grandson, Ian Newman, was a particular friend of mine both at Fairlight and QP schools. In the early 1960's the popular Lesney 'Matchbox' cars could be purchased for 1 s 6d each, later going up to 1 s 8d. Dinky's or Corgi's came a little more expensive, whilst the splendid Spot On models made by Lines Brothers in Margate were more so again. Also on offer would be Mecanno, Britain's model figures, Airfix kits and little soldiers, Homby Dublo trains, to mention but a few.

At the other end of the Lewes Road on the west side close to Park Crescent Place was Bradshaw's. This shop besides toys also stocked children's cycles, doll's prams etc., and Lego. The manager here was a Mr Filby who subsequently purchased the business from its previous owners and renamed it

Filby's. I recall three members of staff: A young man and lady; And a much older lady who was very patient with wavering pocket money spending kids, Mrs Smith. Later I believe Mr Filby's son also worked in the business. My childhood bicycle, a heavy and secondhand Hercules roadster far too big for me at the time, was purchased from this shop for £9 10s 0d in March 1962. I kept it until 1995.

On the east side, roughly mid-way between the two, and next door I think to Scott's Garage, was the Lewes Road Model Shop. Here when a little older one might purchase large Revell kits, balsa wood gliders, even Mamod live steam models. This business also retailed relevant magazines, including the monthly *Railway Modeller*. I believe this shop was a lock up and not part of a larger building. The proprietor, a married man, I can remember but cannot put a name to. He wore glasses and his accent when recalled might suggest Yorkshire or north country origins?

In between the bottoms of St. Martin's Street and St. Paul's Street was a newsagent's which shortly before I moved away was being run by a father and son. Prior to that a quite young lady had run it.

Close to this was a fish and chip plus wet fish shop, possibly though I'm uncertain of memory here it might have been owned by a family named Baines, who *may* also have had a fishing boat working off the beach west of Pool Valley. But memory could be 'all at sea' on this one!

Other remembered shops on the Lewes Road would include the Co-op store on the west side a little to the north of Caledonian Road. Further up from this I remember there was (c. 1961) a wet fish shop. I slightly knew two sisters from Fairlight school whose surname was Moscrop. One of them - had the christian name of Melanie I think. I *think* they may also have had some connection to the fish shop I am thinking of, though I could well be wrong on that point.

By the bottom of Caledonian Road there was a pedestrian crossing over the Lewes Road complete with flashing orange 'Belisha beacons' on their black and white poles. Once, in 1962, I had a near miss on that crossing with a Standard Pennant car which failed to stop in time, and was being driven by a certain Fairlight school teacher no less. The teacher in question (first name Elsie!) sought me out in school and gave me an angry lecture about crossing procedures even though she was the one who had been entirely at fault. I think her aim was to frighten me off from telling my parents about what had occurred. In the event I did tell them that evening, but in common with general parental attitudes of that generation they declined to do anything about it.

On the east side of the Lewes Road opposite to that crossing there was for a time a motorcycle and scooter dealership. It was quite large, and I think located on the corner with Franklin Road. I can remember c. 1960 being shown by my father brand new 'enclosed' Ariel Leader motorcycles made in Selly Oak, Birmingham, lined up behind the Lewes Road front window. I think later that part of these premises sold children's board games for a time.

Further up on the west side was a garage and petrol filling station with a cracked concrete forecourt. My first motor vehicle was a 175cc two-stroke B.S.A. Bantam motorcycle (Reg. No. HLH 986 C) which I used to fill up there. No self service hack then! An attendant in a white coat would come over, and I'd ask for: "A gallon at twenty to one please," that being the required petrol to oil ratio for its two-stroke mix. He'd squirt the oil in, then fill the tank with its one gallon and say: "One and ten pence please," as I rocked the little machine back and forth to ensure a good even mix of the oil with the petrol!

Fairlight School:

Many children in the immediate area attended St. Martin's School, as I did initially. Others went to the Fairlight School in St. Leonard's Road across the Lewes Road. I was taken out of St. Martin's by my parents after just half a term - there was some trouble about it from the St. Martin's head teacher Mrs Baker too - and started at Fairlight infants in November 1959. The infant head at that time was a Miss Bell. The class teacher I had was Mrs West whom I can still clearly recall as being a plump, bespectacled lady in her mid-forties I'd guess. And an extremely good teacher. She got results without recourse to shouting at children, and I made very good progress in her class. At the class Christmas party of 1959 I can still remember that I sat at a table with three other little boys. They were: John Mercer who lived in Round Hill Crescent, a boy named David Hughes who lived in Hanover Street, and a boy named Michael Brown who lived in Brading Road off the Elm Grove. Another couple of friends at that time were Colin Steedman who lived in Harlington Road, and a boy named Ernest Chapman whom I believe whilst in Mrs West's class fell off the open platform at the rear of a bus in the Lewes Road, and sustained a broken arm. A pair of twin siblings there also at that time were Janice and Kevin Ranger, and another little girl I recall was Dawn Pyle.

Another teacher there I was never taught by, but I believe was well thought of, was Mrs Newall. In the 'intake' class the youngest children used to be allowed to take a mid-day nap, and there were several fold-out camp beds propped against a wall in their classroom for that purpose. The infant's playground was the middle and smallest one of three separated by loop-topped iron railings. I think too that there were wooden benches running along the railings and that these had some kind of roof structure over them, but visual memory is a bit hazy here. In the 1959 nativity play I got to play the third wise man!

In September 1960 I moved up to Fairlight Juniors. The head teacher for that first year was an aged lady, Miss Dunstan, who retired in July 1961 and was duly presented with a wheeled tea-trolley. At first my teacher (class 1R) was a very pleasant and quite mature lady, Mrs Craig. After half a term in her class I got moved 'up' to Class 1 where there was a young teacher, Mrs Tompkins. This lady however left at Christmas 1960 due I believe to maternity, and was replaced for the remainder of my time in class 1 by a truly appalling young woman whose name, though I do know it, I'll not bother to record here. Class 2 teacher was the very old Miss Mary Seaman (favorite catch phrase: "Come on! Buck up!"). Class 3 was a young man with a quick temper, Mr Freddie Smith. Class 4 was Miss Elsie Brunt who had been at the school for decades and about whom again, in my opinion at least, the less said the better! The head teacher from September 1961 on was Miss Linda Smith who was quite strict with the pupils but who would also I do recall brook no nonsense at all from certain very long established staff members either! Other staff there at the time were: Mr Morrison (Pop) (class 4R I think); Mr Vinney who used to march us 'school dinner' kids up to the depressingly shabby old Connaught Dining Rooms adjacent to the monumental mason's a little further up the Lewes Road every day; Mrs Hughes; And the young Mrs Simmons (class 2R). The school caretaker, whom I believe lived on site, was Mr Fluck.

Whilst in the fourth year at this school the class I was in won some prestigious school modem dance competition with a performance based on the story of Moses leading the Israelites out of Egypt. It was accomplished under the direction of a peripatetic dance teacher named Miss May. As a result we all got to put on a second showing at some early evening concert down at The Dome and had our collective picture in the Evening Argus (1964).

A couple of anecdotal tales from Fairlight School: One time Miss Linda Smith decided to berate the entire school at morning assembly concerning pupils crossing the Lewes Road other than at the 'lollipop' man provided (by the bottom of Edinburgh Road I think). Hands up all those who crossed somewhere else? This group was then ordered to the foot of the stage. From high above Miss Smith then enquired of each one in turn to explain their reason. Each looked at down at their feet shamefully until she got to a lad named Roy Bishop. "Well, Mr Bishop?" in tone sharply sarcastic. "Please Miss, I crossed with my mummy and daddy." That was kids one, head teacher nil alright!

Another time my class was interrupted by a grim faced fourth year girl who solemnly handed the class teacher a folded note. It had come from the head apparently. Stony eyed and pale faced the teacher succeeded in gaining the class' silent attention: She drew a deep breath: "Someone has used nineteen pieces of paper in the toilet ..."

In 1964 I moved onto Queen's Park School - the school allocation system in those days seemed to be a complete lottery - but that is another story.

Young People's Games and Entertainments in 'The Triangle' in the 1960's:

All kids played on the street, although my late father believing himself to be better than other people tried hard to stop me from mixing that way, and at one time the list of other local children I "wasn't to play with" was quite comprehensive! Most popular game for little boys was certainly 'Cowboys and Indians' influenced no doubt by T.V. shows such as Rawhide, Gun Smoke, The Lone Ranger etc. 'Japs and English' was another in similar vein. Games like football didn't seem to feature at all, and nor was there any particular interest that I can recall about the fortunes of Brighton and Hove Albion F. C.

Girls used to play with skipping ropes, often long ones stretched right across the road with a 'turner' at each end, and one or two jumpers' in the middle. Should the occasional car come along then they would simply lower the rope for it to drive over. A couple of the girl's skipping chants - one slightly risqué! - that I remember picking up from St. Paul's Street girls from the very early '60's were:

'Cinder - ella,
Dressed in yel - la,
Crept upstairs to kiss her fel - la,
But instead she found his snake,
How many babies did it make ...?'

And then the count would begin until one of the jumpers snagged the rope with a foot and then the turners would swap places to get their go. Another went something like:

'Sea shells,
Cockle shells,
Meeny, miney, over,
Mum's in the kitchen,
Doin' a bit a' stitchin',
How many stitches will she make ...?'

A lot of kids had small tricycles, 'Mobo' scooters (red with yellow wheels) Tri-ang pedal cars, and even wooden soap boxes mounted on old pram chassis. (And for which there used to be an annual 'derby' held down on the Madeira Drive up to about 1961.) The narrow pavements must have been quite hair raising places for older residents in the summer holidays especially!

Collecting things was also popular, such as matchbox tops which could be picked up from gutters and the like at zero cost. Tea cards were also popular, with 'swapping' deals commonplace. Also round about 1960 Brooke Bond tea I think it was were giving away little colour transparencies of such subjects as sports (football, tennis, golf etc.) plus tropical fish, butterflies and the like in little sets. They also offered a battery powered plastic hold up viewer, but only if you had collected all the required coupons which also came in the tea packets. I actually got one of these but only after being given as a gift a whole load of the coupons by our St. Paul's Street neighbour John Luxford.

Disputes between kids were very frequent and often ended in fisticuffs. This could and often did in turn lead to shouting from, and sometimes between, angry parents. But juvenile enmities were not long lasting. If a lone kid or a group from a neighbouring street ventured in territorial confrontation could occur. It was all part of the game really!

When bored with playing in the street, or to get away from parents etc., small groups sometimes took themselves down the The Levels, or more popularly to Saunder's Park up the Lewes Road by the barracks. There on the centre of the sloping grass the derelict remains of what must once have been a large formal shrubbery - 'the bushes' - could instantly become a laagered wagon train, or a crusader castle under siege, or whatever else your imagination desired! Lower down there was a sand filled pit with swings and slides etc., plus a metal drinking fountain where you held down the lever at the side to coax a dribble of liquid out of the perforated mouth piece. No health regulations then! In the summer months usually groups of local kids with some no older than seven or eight but perhaps with at least one eleven or twelve year old 'in charge' would disappear down to the seafront for an afternoon. I also remember a winter walk down there, c. 1964, with a group which certainly included Irene Perkins, David Martin, Derek Luxford, Paul Woolvin and no doubt some others. All canying roller skates we enjoyed a cold but energetic day skating on the closed and unattended rink that used to be on the site of the soon to be established 'Peter Pan' playground mid way along the Madeira Drive. Another time I recall myself plus the last named three above standing in a howling winter gale at the end of the banjo groin as huge white crested waves came crashing down the legs of the Palace Pier. When a little older bike rides sometimes got organised, the ride up the Lewes Road to Stanmer Park being one I recollect doing with again David Martin, Derek Luxford, probably Irene Perkins, and an older lad who lived for a short time only near the bottom end of Park Crescent Road, whose name - I think - was John Eury.

On fireworks night (5th November) and no matter what the weather, half of Brighton seemed to congregate on The Level. There would be a huge bonfire blazing away on the surfaced quarter, with side stalls, fireworks being let off all over the place, yelling kids, courting teenagers, milling crowds everywhere. At other times travelling fun fairs used, to set up on The Level for a few days, and us local kids - probably teenagers by then - would take ourselves down there. Once I remember going into a wrestling tent there to watch two shambolic bouts. For the promise of £2 if they could go for three rounds likely challengers were enticed up from the crowd to fight one of the 'champions'. The challengers tended to be well built young men who had downed several pints already! One of the 'champions' there I recall had the ring name of 'Jonnie Eagles'. Of course, the paying audience (2/- for adults, 1/- for children) all rooted for the challenger! (And whilst on the topic of wrestlers, the Luxford family from No. 18 St. Paul's Street talked about a cousin of theirs as I believe he was who was a semi professional wrestler in Brighton at the time, Mr Ray Luxford.) Another time (c. 1968) I remember going into a motorcycle 'wall of death' booth at a fun fair down on The Level. Visually exciting certainly, but the blattering exhaust note of the ancient and American made Indian vee-twin machine hurtling round and round the drum like circle of wooden boards - and then changing up a gear! - is still quite unforgettable!

As a teenager the most popular local pub by far was The Lewes Road Inn on the east side toward the Hartington Road junction. Its manager was a slightly 'camp' individual as I recall, named Frank. I used to play in that pub's darts team on occasions in 1970/71. Another popular pub for 'Triangle' young persons then was The Admiral Napier situated at the bottom of Elm Grove beside the acute junction with Islingword Road.

For quieter entertainments - or those that could better involve girlfriends - there were the two local cinemas: The Gaiety, later renamed The Ace (1965 I think) and then finally The Vogue, and also the then decrepit old Duke of York's down Viaduct Road beside the fire station. That establishment always seemed to put on films months after they'd been everywhere else. In the latter mid-sixties

however under aged customers could get in there so long as they paid the full adult price with few if any questions asked. The 'X' certificated films us 14 and 15 year olds all wanted to see there were not French sex offerings however, but the good old Hammer Horrors with Christopher Lee, Peter Cushing, and co. all hamming it up! Years before that however my mother used to take me to The Gaiety, usually once a week. Major films that I remember seeing there with her would include 'Ben Hur', 'South Pacific, and Cliff Richard's 'Summer Holiday' which I think was to be her last. Unlike most households in the area even in the early '60's, ours did not then have a television as my father didn't approve of them.

Political Activity in 'The Triangle' 1960's:

My late father was a member of the Brighton Conservative Association, and so latterly in particular I came into contact with various councilors etc. Two I remember from c. 1970/71 were Councilor Mrs Mary Mack whom I believe represented the ward, and also Councilor Sam Levisson. I found myself roped in to helping out at fund raising jumble sales and auctions in St. Martin's church hall, and on actual election days when St. Martin's was in use as the local polling station No. 21's back room behind the shop was used by that party as a sort of 'front line' office. At least once too I had to help out shoving blue coloured leaflets through letter boxes, and later on election evening knocking on doors to try and get indolent voters out. Not all potential voters appreciated being asked, and some of them would tell you that they didn't ...

It is probably well remembered that in the cliff hanger General Election of 15th October 1964 the Labour party in the person of Mr Dennis Hobden gained Brighton Kemp Town constituency from the Tories by just seven votes after seven re-counts (Pavilion remaining Tory). It is perhaps not so well known that a good many Tory activists, my late father among them, kept themselves so busy that day that they never found the time to go out and vote themselves. After Mr Andrew Bowden regained the seat for the Tories in the 18th June 1970 General Election he later made a 'thank you' tour of party faithful which included a very brief stop at No. 21 St. Paul's Street where I got to shake his hand. Lucky me!

Ward councilors from the Labour party whom I recall by name were Mr Harry George (early '60's) and later Mr Ray Blackwood. Another seeking election at least - though I don't believe he did get elected - under the Tory flag was Mr Michael Cohen (c. 1970) whose wife Mrs Marie-Louise Cohen I remember drove a very sporty car - possibly a Ford Mustang or similar.

The first time I voted in my life was at St. Martin's during a council election in late May 1971 when I was three weeks turned 18.

The Salvation Army:

There was a large Salvation Army citadel at the lower end of Park Crescent Terrace, and in the early '60's certainly groups of up to forty Salvationists complete with instruments used to patrol the streets of the area every Sunday morning. One of their halting points was close to the end of Park Crescent near the St. Paul's Street junction, where they would re-rank themselves and then commence to play. Always immaculately turned out in their dark blue uniforms, and accomplished musicians all, they were it is fair to say always treated with respect.

In summer us kids would sometimes tag along behind the end of their marching column for a time, sometimes on foot and other times wobbling along at marching pace on our bicycles. Their route

twelve years spent growing up in 'The Triangle' 1959 - 1971:

The Luxford's family home at No. 18 St. Paul's Street was one of several that backed onto parts of St. Martin's School. Mr John Luxford in particular used to relate tales about groups of kids - usually boys - playing truant (i.e. 'bunking off') from the school who would clamber over the play ground wall at break time, drop down the other side into the Luxford's back yard, run across it and pull open their back door, sprint across their kitchen and on up their basement stairs, down their hallway, and finally out through their front door and thereby into St. Paul's Street and freedom! Apparently this had happened on quite a number of occasions.

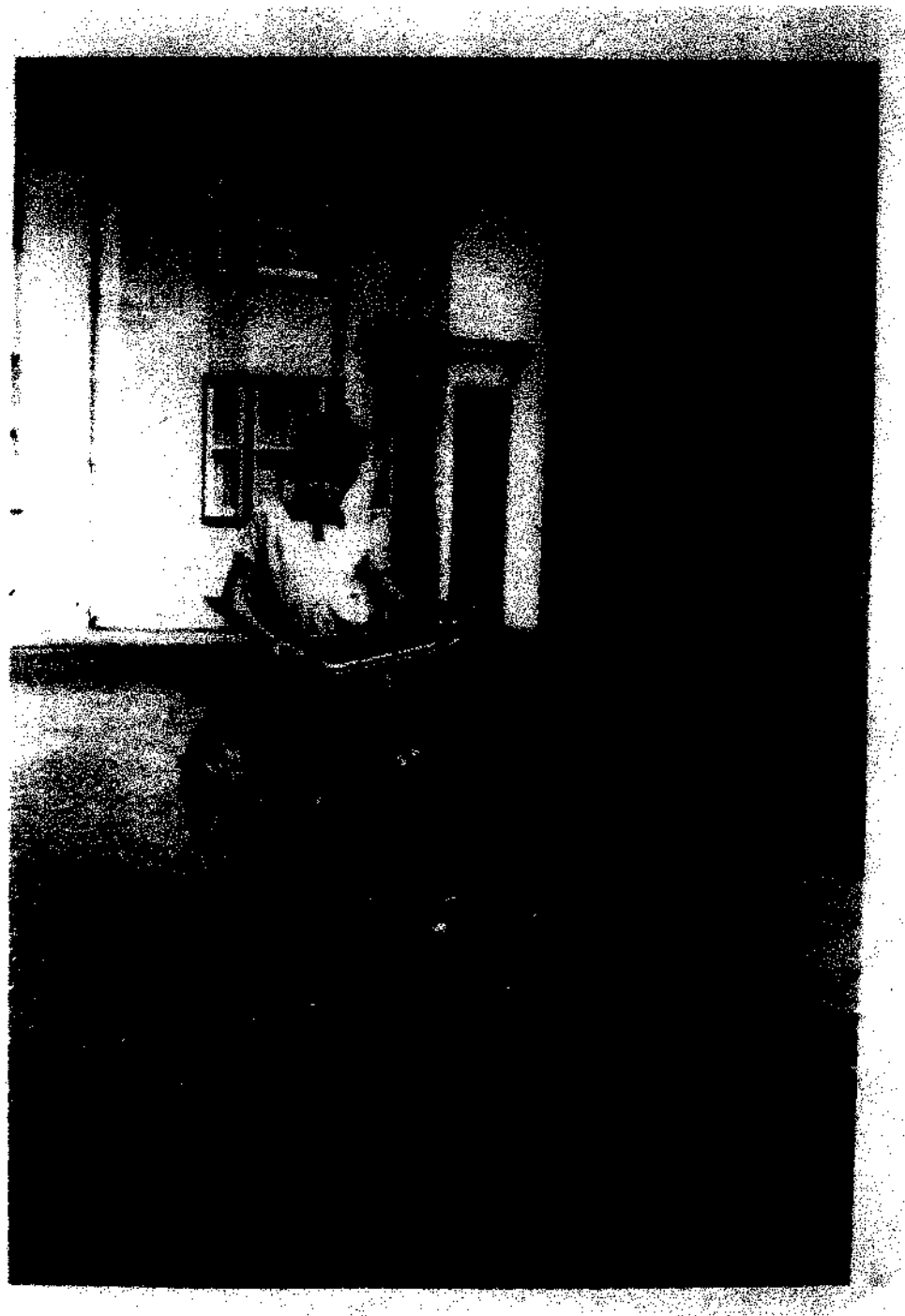
One time a member of a local family who shall not be identified detonated a thunderflash in a house back yard, the explosive in question having presumably been purloined from an army ordnance store attached to the barracks. Within the high walled confines of the yard the resultant boom was as frightening as it was sudden. Some neighbours thought initially at least that there had just occurred a gas explosion. On this occasion the police were informed. Very early the next morning an army lorry arrived containing four red capped military police. A member of the household was put under guard and summarily flung - literally - into the back of the truck which then proceeded to make off as swiftly as it arrived.

And finally, the event which above all others caused the most outrage of all in the area in the twelve years I lived there: One summer - I'll identify it no more precisely than that - a certain lady of the neighbourhood in her middle thirties, unmarried it must be said - and far from unattractive - became romantically involved with an itinerant young man who may well have been a university student and who lodged in a room in a house on Round Hill Crescent. She would have been about 16 years his senior. It became their habit to walk together - stroll might be more accurate - arm in arm along the east side of Park Crescent Road after their daily afternoon assignation in a flat belonging to a family member of hers in Devonian Court until they reached the corner with St. Paul's Street - and thus just across the road from No. 21. This invariably occurred round about tea time and if the weather was inclement the lady would hold aloft a pink patterned umbrella which, walking tightly together with arms round one another's waists, they could both shelter beneath. When they reached the corner they would separate and go their different ways, he in the direction of Round Hill Crescent, she down St. Paul's Street towards the Lewes Road. However before parting they always exchanged a single, brief, but loving, little kiss. I have to admit that from the upstairs front room window I used to watch out for them sometimes. For whatever reason this relatively innocuous action caused local tongues to wag in overdrive, not least my late father's who for all his pretentiousnesses could gossip for England when it suited him. A few weeks passed, then quite suddenly one boiling hot Saturday afternoon matters came to head. The pair strolled up to the corner as usual. A nearby front door burst open and another very much older lady of the neighbourhood started to verbally berate the two lovebirds savagely. I actually was an eye witness to this whole incident and heard the most splendid of insults - "Whore of Babylon!" - spat out from a range of about ten feet. However with quite magnificent aplomb the lady who was the target of this tirade, far from retaliating in kind, instead slipped her left hand around the back of her young man's head and proceeded to demonstrate her affection for him considerably more comprehensively than was usual, whilst at the same time simultaneously raising her right hand behind him with her two fingers held aloft in the direction of her attacker. And, just for good measure, gave her right wrist a couple of upward flicks too! The verbal assailant had by this time moved into the middle of the road screeching like a demented banshee ...

And there, I think, I really must finish!



August 1959: This picture shows an interior view of the shop room of 21 St. Paul's Street. The lady is my late mother Mrs Betty Ritchie *nee* Hazelton, and the little boy is myself aged six years and three months. The marble topped counter is behind my mother. The closed door beneath the clock leads into the kitchen. The door just in view to the right leads into the back room where the first floor stairs are located. The clock belonged to the shop and was marked 'London County Council' on its dial. The floor was dark red linoleum. My parents ran the shop as a retail business until 1962. This picture was taken looking through the shop's entrance door which was set at a not quite 45 degree angle across the slightly less than 90 degree corner between the two streets. It was approached by a quite high single step. The 'main' bedroom and bathroom of the flat were located in the first floor immediately off Park Crescent Road



April 1962: This view of the St. Paul's Street/Park Crescent Road junction shows myself not quite nine years old with my 'Hercules' bicycle which had been bought secondhand from Bradshaw's in the Lewes Road for £9 10s 0d a month previously. The former stables on the end of the St. Paul's Street terrace is to the right, and the house visible behind I am fairly certain is that belonging to the Rodrigues family. The road had just been resurfaced, and I believe at that time the Brighton Borough Council was using brownish-orange chippings rather than the more familiar grey.