

Daphne – Basildon Hall

Mum and Dad would just buy the animals as they went along. The house they bought (Basildon Hall) was owned by a German by the name of Mr Brasner he rented to us for just over £1.00 a week. It had 11 rooms so was quite big.

Mum would go to Wickford market (livestock) I can remember her buying some chicks and bringing them home in her shopping bag. We would look after them till they were big enough to lay eggs and would do the same for the ducks.

In those days you could buy duck eggs that were ready to go under the hens or ducks. We also had rabbits then we bought goats.

As far as I can remember we could not sell the eggs, but would have to clean and grade (size) the eggs that was my job and place them into trays which held around thirty eggs then stack the trays on top of each other and the man from the ministry would come once a week to collect them.

We were allowed to kill one pig a year, but later it was two, we used to do bacon and the rest was for fresh meat we wasn't allowed to sell the meat you could only give it to people so the neighbours got extra.

They then brought a white cow called snowball for milk my brother and I had a small milk round you were allowed to take it to people and the goats milk was supposed to be particularly good for people.

When my sister was about thirteen I would have been ten dad bought our first horse he put a cart to it so we could ride around in it. Dad had a motor bike then progressed to a car that had been in an accident so he panel beat out the dents it was a Morris eight BYF 378 after that we had different cars.

They moved in to Basildon Hall it used to be the Manor House and is mentioned in the Dooms Day book. The land that belonged to the hall was about three acres with a moat three quarters of the way round it with a little bridge where you crossed over. There was another field on the opposite side of Beresford Road that was six acres as you walked further up past Basildon Hall there was an eleven acre field and this was used by the ministry they used to grow wheat and flax etc here.

Mum and Dad bought a bit of everything Cows, horses, Chickens, ducks, turkeys, geese, pigs, and goats but not a donkey as dad said it wouldn't earn it's keep.

They did not have any previous experience of running a small holding. My father worked at Roneo corner in Romford, for Roneo Neopost Equipment they made the franking machines. Then they went over to munition's and he made things in the machine shop when he first started he was called a belt man they used to look after the big belts used to run the machines 'it different now' but in them times they used to lace them together if they split

I was born in Romford in 1934.

We moved here in 1942 when I was 7 years old mainly because of the war

And mum and dad had always wanted a small holding and saw this house advertised with the land, not sure if it was the "Small Holder" or similar type of magazine and it was for rent.

They had no background in farming. Dad was born in Barking.

Mum was born Bow.

