

“Gudgin’s”

The History of YOUR CODDENHAM COMMUNITY SHOP.



Fred Barrell, Albert Gudgin, Billy Button

THE VILLAGE SHOP

THE SHOP – TIMELINE

Our village shop was a shop way back in the C17, with the stable yards, gardens & an orchard, much of which are still there today. The following are the documents we have managed to locate:

1696 And just to put this date in the context of those times. The Civil War was in the past, Charles II had been restored to the throne and after him came James II and it was now in the reign of William & Mary.

ROBERT GLOVER (collar maker) had a loan from JOHN DEYNES of Jordaines (now Manor Farm) John Deynes MD had been in the service of the Parliament under Oliver Cromwell and played an active part. He was a Lieut Colonel at the Battle of Marston Moor & was Major of Horse at the Siege of Colchester. The loan he made to Robert Glover was for £240, to enable him to purchase the property. Robert Glover defaults and the property reverts to John Deynes. So, we do know that there was a shop here in 1696 & possibly earlier, which means it's been a shop for well over 300 years.

John Deynes died in 1703 & ROBERT GLOVER makes another attempt to buy the premises from his executors in:

1705 This time the Rev Balthazar Gardemau loans the money, but again Glover defaults and it reverts to Gardemau. In:

1711 Yet another attempt is made, and ROBERT GLOVER has a loan from a widow called Charity Wickes. This time, the sale completed in 1712. Glover's son Robert (grocer) inherits after his death and after this Roberts death, it is inherited by his son John.

1741 This JOHN GLOVER SELLS TO JOHN FAIRFAX (grocer) John Fairfax dies in:

1770 And his EXECUTORS SELL TO RICHARD KEEBLE (carpenter) - five years on in:

1775 RICHARD KEEBLE SELLS TO WILLIAM NOTCUTT (grocer & linen draper), for £317. He had a loan of £250 from a John Rodbard (surgeon of Ipswich). He also fails to pay off his loan and in:

1781 WILLIAM NOTCUTT SELLS TO ROBERT CREAME (grocer from Diss, Norfolk) for £630, of which £250 to be paid to Rodbard to repay Notcutt's loan, but this was made into another mortgage by Rodbard. The next year in:

1782 It would appear that ROBERT CREAME (shopkeeper) was in financial trouble & there was a lease from his various creditors, listed as Edmund Railton of London (merchant), Joshua Kenworthy of London (linen draper), William Ransom of London (tobacconist), Thomas White of London (oil & colourman), Cooper, Garrett & Taddy of London (tea merchants) and Stephens & Dell of London (hosiers). He was to sell all & satisfy his creditors after discharging his mortgage. He was declared bankrupt and told "to sell by auction or other public sale to the highest bidder".

- 1784 CREDITORS SOLD TO ROBERT SEAMAN (grocer & linen draper), who took on the mortgage from Rodbard and no more problems seem to arise.
- 1813 ROBERT SEAMAN had died & his executors sold to THOMAS PRITTY JUNIOR (grocer & draper), in trust for his son CHARLES PRITTY (grocer & draper). They were the highest bidders at £910.
- 1873 CHARLES PRITTY LET TO JOHN NEAVE ON A 7 YEAR LEASE and later in that year CHARLES PRITTY died.
- 1877 EXECUTORS OF CHARLES PRITTY SOLD TO JOHN NEAVE (grocer) for £600
- 1882 JOHN NEAVE SOLD TO THOMAS ADAMS (grocer)
- 1884 THOMAS ADAMS DIED
- 1887 EXECUTORS OF THOMAS ADAMS SOLD TO STEPHEN BERESFORD TWIDDY OF BANHAM (grocer) for £850 with a mortgage for £600.



The shop and adjacent properties when purchased by Stephen Twiddy

- 1890 TWIDDY WAS DISCHARGED FROM MORTGAGE & OWNED THE PROPERTY OUTRIGHT. He was the man who re-fronted the shop & rebuilt the attached cottages at the turn of the century, as seen in the photo.



The shop re-fronted and the cottages rebuilt



1915 S B TWIDDY SOLD TO P J LEWIS (grocer & draper) for £825.

Mr Lewis and Billy Button

1923 After the death of P J Lewis, his executors sold to Albert Francis Moore GUDGIN (grocer of Ipswich). His son Dudley & his wife Joan took over from him & in turn their son Roy & Ann his wife.

ALBERT AND MILLIE GUDGIN remembered by their daughter-in-law Joan



Millie's mother, Millie and Albert

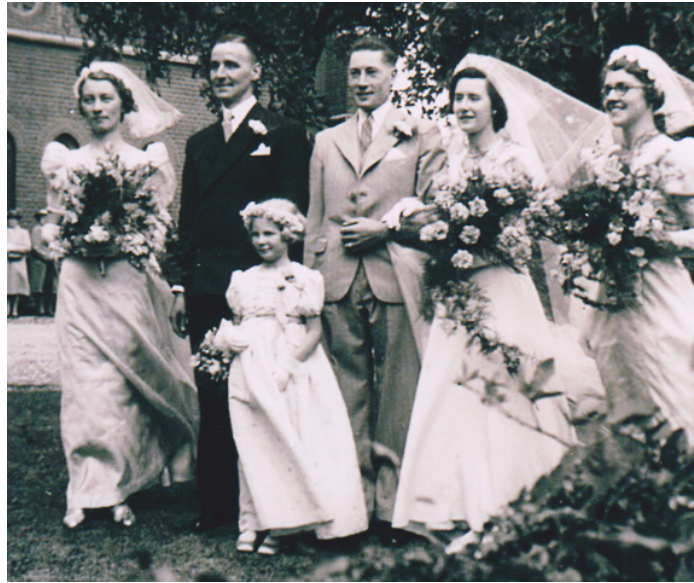
Albert and Millie Gudgin came to Coddensham and purchased the Village Stores from Mr Lewis in 1923. Before then Albert had been the manager of the Co-op in Carr Street, Ipswich, and had therefore had ample experience in the retail trade. Millie's father ran Townsends Fish Merchants, which was opposite Aldertons in the Buttermarket, so it was likely she was no stranger to the trade either. Dudley would have been 12 years old then and Vera about 17. They said when they took over the shop the whole place was painted in green distemper.



Dudley and Albert

My earliest recollections go back to when I first met Dud. I used to go over to the shop at the weekends and when Dud was in the greenhouse I used to talk to Millie and Albert. They worked very hard but lived well. We always had High Tea with salmon and salad, great tinned peaches and cream. Albert used to take a glass jug over to Mr Wink (Willow Farm), who would fill it with thick cream for a couple of shillings. They liked their food. On winter nights Albert used to get all the odd bits of bacon, mushrooms, tomatoes and sausages and cook them up in a colossal frying pan. There was this marvelous smell of this massive 'fry-up' all over the house. They were wonderful ones for

parties and were one of the first people to own a car in the village. One was called an 'Overland' and the second one was an Austin - this would have been about 1928.



Joan & Dudley's wedding, July 1940

After we were married, we lived at the shop. Millie and Albert lived at one end, and we lived at the other. Pigs were kept down the bottom of the garden and two were slaughtered each week for the meat. They used to make their own pork cheeses, lard and sausages. The counter near the cellar door was like a big chopping block where the meat was cut up. It had to be scrubbed every night. There was no sanitation then, only a water pump in the garden and three pails in the kitchen. I used to have to get up early to get the drinking water and water for the old copper.

Everything came in bags or boxes which were nailed down and their contents had to be weighed and bagged - prunes, raisins, sultanas, apricots, salt, tea, etc. and sugar which was always in a blue moire bag. We had some lovely tasting cheeses which were left to mature.

It was hard work in those days, especially at Christmas time. Black celery, big bags of sprouts, etc. used to be out in the frost and snow and we'd be making up orders until 1 o'clock in the morning. Everything seemed so cold in those days - our hands were continually frozen. Sometimes the men would work all through the night, and I used to get up at 3 o'clock in the morning to do the baking and then help them.

The shop was a drapers' as well, with a big counter on the lefthand side by the window. I remember the big brass measure for measuring the material. Millie ran a Christmas Club which was funded by the Gardemau Trust. So much money was allotted to those people in the village who were not so fortunate and when it got near to Christmas, Millie would order extra sheets, towels, tablecloths, etc. ready for people who would want them. I remember the old, buttoned shoes, hobnail boots and galoshes which used to be hung up outside, either side of the shop doorway. In the middle of the shop was a display - made up with orange boxes in tiers and always looked especially nice at Christmas. The left-hand window was always decorated at Christmas too.

A horse and cart were used to deliver the groceries. They were kept in the stables at the bottom of the garden and looked after by Fred the horseman. We also had a gardener, and Billy Button used to work for us in the shop and deliver the groceries as well.

Millie was very house proud, and her home was her castle and one day I was in the kitchen with her - it was about 11 o'clock in the morning when suddenly a lady appeared in the kitchen. She'd walked in through the front door, through the long-arched hallway and along another passageway

and stood in the kitchen doorway. She was a marvellous looking person, tall with blond hair and a picture hat and very superior. She said, "I have been knocking at the front door and couldn't make you hear. I've come to see you about having evacuees." It was the Lady de Saumarez from Shrubland Hall, but I don't think Dud's mother was very impressed! She was certainly not very pleased that she had walked into her house uninvited. Vera (Dud's sister) and Edward Semmence were living at "Hillside" at the time, and they took in three land girls.

Joan Gudgin 1992

November 2014 – Presentation to History Club

From Roy Gudgin

We feel that this recollection is a great way for us to tell our story of our life at the village shop.

My grandfather, Albert, was born at Olney in Bedfordshire on 27th November 1879 and his parents moved to Ipswich and bought a house in Spring Road. He started work at the Ipswich Co-op and became their manager and then decided to branch out and run his own business – this was the start of “Gudgins” in Coddendam, 1923!

(Roy) As a child growing up in the 1940's you can imagine there were many temptations living on the premises. I am told that one of my greatest pleasures when I had learned to crawl was to escape into the shop and turn on the vinegar barrel tap, flooding the shop floor, not pleasing my parents and being frowned upon by my grandparents. There was no escaping that watchful eye as we all lived together in the old rambling property!

My first recollections were going to school in Ipswich on 'Bicker's Bus' to a school in Fonnereau Road, Ipswich, staying there till I was 11, but things didn't go too well so I started Claydon School. Joining all my mates from the village, cycling there and back 5 days a week. Great fun was had on numerous occasions on the journey there and back to school, sometimes I must confess playing truant!

At 15 I automatically joined my Mum and Dad and Grandfather in the family business, weighing up countless bags of sugar on Monday mornings, cutting 28lb blocks of lard into half pounds and pounds, etc. Through the working week I delivered orders on the trade bike to locals in the village. At 18 I passed my driving test so then started delivering orders around the villages.

Also, at the age of 12, in the barn and buildings at the back of the shop my hobby was to keep 70 laying hens and in July we'd buy in young cockerels for fattening up for Christmas.

When I was 14 years of age the Coddendam Fete was held at Choppins Hall by Colonel and Mrs Baines (an annual event). I cycled down there and took part in the games, etc. and also bowling for a pig, which at the end of the day I won! I returned to the shop, very excited to tell my parents about my luck on winning the pig and asked, “could I keep it?” Father said, “OK, if you look after it”. I cleaned out a shed at the bottom of the garden and it was the start of my pig fattening and breeding which lasted some 10 years till I married Ann.



From Ann Gudgin

I met Roy at Crowfield Youth Club when I was 17 (he was 19). I immediately enjoyed the hustle and bustle of the village shop and soon became involved.

We married 5 years later, living in Crowfield for 10 years. Roy continued to work in the family business, and I was busy being a housewife and mother to Virginia and Christopher.

We swapped properties in 1975; Roy's parents retiring and moving to our bungalow, and we moved to the shop, and I became Roy's business partner as well.

Roy made several alterations to the shop, expanding it as business was good and we took on extra staff to cope with the workload. I became very involved with the serving, banking, VAT, buying and deliveries and Mark, our third child,

was born the next year.

The business continued to increase its trade, so we took on more local staff who were such a devoted team and many Saturday girls. For me, personally, it became more than a job – it was a 'way of life'.

The property needed major alterations and repairs as Roy's parents and grandparents never bothered to do it. The whole property had to be re-wired. We converted two large bedrooms over the shop into a games room, which the children enjoyed with their friends having sleepovers. One night we had 32 guests.

On the 26th April 1986 the last butcher's shop in the village closed – 'Semmmences'. Jack Little was the butcher then and asked if we would like to open a fresh meat counter in the shop. We thought it would complement our existing business. Work to convert a large cellar under the shop into a preparation room commenced, including a cold room, stainless steel tables and counters, etc. Jack was such a helpful fellow – he came to work for us 3 mornings a week to get the business up and running. This in time became a large part of our business over the next few years which included our own home cooked gammons, several varieties of burgers as well as the delicious 'Coddendam Sausages'. The secret recipe originated from Alan Semmence. Most weeks we made approximately 100lbs.

A customer of ours asked if we would like to convert one of our rooms into an antique shop. Roy thought it was a good addition to the business and something new for Coddendam. After a few weeks our lounge was converted and I ran the shop soon learning about Queen Anne Legs, etc. I was not best pleased at losing

my lovely lounge but very soon Roy and friends converted our lean-to building at the rear of the property into the lounge we use today. Unfortunately, we had to close the antique side of the business, as my hours at the day job at Claydon Primary School were increased quite considerably and I couldn't be in two places at once.

Following swiftly on, our next project was to create a craft shop in that room which our shop staff could include in the day to day running of the shop. It was very successful, with local people making crafts, etc. In the summertime we opened a tearoom inside the craft shop, opening 7 days a week.



*1994 Calor Gas/Woman and Home
Village Shop of the Year*

In 1996 we took over the Post Office when Mrs Hattrick retired. David Harfitt helped clear a space at the side of our shop and transferred everything from the High Street. Brenda Goodchild kindly came to be our post mistress to set us on our way. This made a huge increase of customers visiting our shop. Also, along with the post office, the village sorting office was in our garden and Paul Plummer was the postman and cycled around the village delivering our letters and parcels – no vans in those days.

If our lives weren't busy enough, we began letting some of the property out. As we had spare rooms above the shop, we converted them into a flat. This proved to be very successful, and we went on to do another one a few years later.

The outbuildings at the bottom of the garden needed some attention which coincided with the idea of getting planning permission to convert into an annex which was duly completed in 2001. As Roy retired, we thought it an ideal place to move to, "To live happily ever after" but Roy had other ideas. After 4 weeks it hadn't worked out, so we moved everything back to Gudgin House – his roots were too deep, as he was born there!

We then put Wisteria Cottage, as it was called, into the hands of Country Holidays. This part of the business worked very well – spending my weekends washing and cleaning the cottage with a bit of help from Roy.

Things changed dramatically when our first grandson was on the way, so we booked our flight to Australia to be present at his birth. We managed to get friends to carry on here with the 'lets' and my colleagues covered for me at work. However, when grandson No.2 was imminent, I handed in my notice, and we turned our 'lets' into 6-month tenancies so no more weekly cleaning and washing sheets was necessary for us and I retired from school to become a full-time granny.

And then in 1992:

When Roy and Ann retired from their everyday life in the shop, it was let as a going concern to **Julian Gambol**, who was local to the area and who carried everything on in much the same way.



The Millennium Year 2000

2010 **Jane and Julia** took over the tenancy from Julian and again, apart from some updating and modernisation in the shop, things carried on as before until 2019, when they decided to call it a day

2019 The grocers became a **Community Shop**. With the issue of shares and donations, the shop opened again in the autumn of 2019. The team of local volunteers are very ably managed by **Bliss** under the auspices of **Rod and the Coddensham Community Shop Committee**.

Today in 2022

The shop as always is still the central hub in the village, selling fresh meat, fresh bread daily, offering an Off Licence and a part time Outreach Post Office. A café within the shop and tables outside, caters for the needs of both local people and those passing by.

The shop is still owned by the Gudgin family, who next year (2023) will celebrate 100 years since they first came to Coddendam. It is still a grocer's shop and remains at the heart of our village.



Coddendam Village History Club 2022