

## Winslow Oral History Project

### Interview Summary

<b>Interviewee</b>	<b>George Charles Langley</b>		<b>Date of interview</b>	<b>3-12-2012</b>
<b>Maiden name</b>				
<b>DOB</b>	1938	<b>Place of birth</b>	Berkshire	
<b>Father's name and occupation</b>	George Langley. Head Stud Groom			
<b>Mother's occupation &amp; maiden name</b>	Doris Lucas. In service at Stowe School before marriage			
<b>Keynames</b>	Charles Henry Langley, Mr Lion, Jack Foddy, Clarence Smith, Mr Williams, John Hagermold, Trevor Cox, Harry Bennett			
<b>Keywords</b>	Winslow School, The Boot, Wicken, Weedon, Cavalry, High Street, Bodicote, Sunninghill, Bletchley, railway, Calvert, Stewartby, Greyhound Lane, Fire station, Wolverton Tech, Wolverton House, Whaddon Hall, Isle of Man TT, Royal Corps of Signals, Hanslope, Lucas Electrical, Haddenham, Verney Road, Old Mill Furlong, Magpie Way, Western Lane, Winslow Town Council, Royal British Legion, Brackley, The Windmill, Western Lane, Scouts.			
<b>Interviewer</b>	Mary Hunt			
<b>Abstract</b>	George talks about his childhood & education in Winslow and Wolverton, his parents and his grandparents, particularly Charles Henry Langley. He remembers his army career in Germany, Cyprus and England and his activities in Winslow e.g. Royal British Legion and the Town Council on which he was Mayor.			
<b>No. of files (tracks)</b>	2	<b>Copyright status</b>	Cleared	
<b>File</b>				
002	George was born in 1938 in Berkshire, where his father (George) was Head Stud Groom at a racing stable owned by Mr Murray. When his father was called up at the beginning of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> World War the family had to leave their house immediately and moved to Wicken, near Buckingham. George's father was born in Winslow at The Boot Inn, Tinker's End where his grand-father, Charles Henry, was the landlord. George believes that he kept dancing bears in a barn at the back of the pub which was later knocked down. The family moved back to Winslow at the end of the war.			
	George remembers the headmaster at Winslow School, Mr Lion, who he describes as vicious. He recounts a story about his brother receiving harsh discipline for a minor offence. George remembers a small children's play area in the area where the public hall is now. He recalls playing at the spinney.			
03.38	George's mother was a Lucas from Buckingham. His father joined the cavalry in the 15 <sup>th</sup> and 19 <sup>th</sup> King's Royal Hussars, in 1919, having been too young to fight in the 1 <sup>st</sup> world war. George and Doris met while his father was stationed at Weedon training on a rough riders course. His mother had been in service at Stowe School. George's maternal grandfather died before he was born and his grandmother married again, to a Jack Foddy, who was much loved by the family. His grandmother lived in several cottages in Wicken, one of which was an old bakery, with outside toilets and no running water. George recalls the smell of apples and pears laid out on the attic floor and the smell of wood shavings in the			

	<p>barn. The cottages had large gardens and George remembers there being a well. George's father probably became a gardener after leaving school but he had learned to ride so he joined the cavalry. During his time in the army he rode in steeple chases and performed in front of foreign dignitaries. He came out of the army in 1935. George thinks of his father as a wonderful Dad and was very sorry that he died before George left the army and settled back in Winslow. George had one brother, who is now dead.</p>
11.30	<p>George's father was born in 1901 and is believed to have had 7 brothers and sisters. George remembers his grandfather, Charles Henry, living at 42 High Street (the house was later divided in two and one part is now an optician's) until his death. The house had gas lighting. There is a brief discussion with the interviewer about information relating to his grandfather managing the Boot Inn and also the people living there in the 1901 census, including his wife Amy and his daughter Florence.</p> <p>This information can be found at <a href="http://pubshistory.com/Buckinghamshire/Winslow/Boot.shtml">http://pubshistory.com/Buckinghamshire/Winslow/Boot.shtml</a></p> <p>George thinks that travelling performers stayed at The Boot and that is why they had the dancing bears there. George remembers his grandmother, Amy Maria, as very quiet. He believes that his grandparents may have met at Bodicote as there are family graves there. He has heard that his grandfather may have been some sort of traveller himself. Asked about riding George says that he and his brother both had rides on a few Derby winners.</p>
17.04	<p>When his father left the cavalry he worked at Sandhill, [near Middle Claydon] and then moved with Mr Murray to his stables [at The White House, Kingston Lovell] in Berkshire. In 1941 he returned to the army and at the end of his service he was offered a job in Belgium looking after officer's horses but he came home to Winslow and worked on the railway at Bletchley. When the railways were re-organised he left and worked at Calvert for a few years. He retired aged 70. He was given a miniature brick on his retirement and went to Stewartby to receive it. When the family moved back to Winslow they lived in 2 rooms above their aunt's house on the High St (later Rosie's restaurant). There was a large garden and cousins to play with. George recounts some of their adventures, including managing to get into Clarence Smith's greengrocery van which was parked in Greyhound Lane, and setting off the alarm at the fire station.</p>
22.08	<p>In 1950 George passed to go to Wolverton Tech, travelling by train. He was very unhappy there and particularly had trouble with algebra. He boarded for 1 year at Wolverton House where the girls lived in the main house and the boys lived in a converted stable. He remembers one boy, John Hagermold, whose father, he believes, was the German Ambassador and who lived at Whaddon Hall. He went to school in lederhosen. One of George's friends eventually won the Isle of Man TT race. Mr Williams was the Headmaster and there are still reunions, many of the former pupils having had prestigious careers. George left school at 16 and went to work at Sandall Precision Engineering in Bletchley starting in the machine shop and moving to the drawing office. They were allowed to go to college once a week, unpaid, to complete their education but after a year George left and joined the army, the Royal Signals. He did 3 years and then went to the Diplomatic Wireless Service at Hanslope Park. He then re-enlisted and spent 23 years in the army. He was a High Speed Morse Telegraphist and later became a Weapons, Nuclear and Biological Warfare Instructor. George spent 15 years in Cyprus, Germany and the Middle East.</p>
31.56	<p>George married in 1962. He recounts the story of how he met his wife, Margaret</p>

	<p>Elliott, through a friend. They were married at South Bank, Middlesbrough and his wife joined him in Germany. Later he was training NCO at Loughborough for 3 years and lived in Cyprus during the period of the troubles. He tells a story from this period. His two eldest sons went to a Greek nursery school in Cyprus. He went back to Germany, later finishing his career as a sergeant in Catterick, which he enjoyed. During this time he was posted for 8 weeks to Northumberland during the national fire strike and he tells a story about the generosity of the local people. In 1979 he left the army after his father had recently died. He returned to Winslow, did a security officer's course at Woolworths, worked with Lucas Electrical at Haddenham and had various jobs for security companies in the area. To begin with he lived in Verney Road, then moved to Old Mill Furlong and finally to Magpie Way.</p>
49.54	<p>George was co-opted onto Winslow Town Council and eventually became Mayor. He retired from ill health and Trevor Cox took over as Mayor. George was a member of the Royal British Legion and is now Chairman for the second time. He talks briefly about the future of the RBL and about a local man, son of Dr Cullen, who has just won the DFC. George says that he joined the army to see the world. He had three children, boys, and two still live locally. The eldest has a factory in Brackley making cooling systems for Formula One and high performance cars. The other local son works for himself as a builder and decorator. George has 9 grandchildren and 1 great grandchild.</p>
1.00.36  End 1.05.12	<p>Asked about whether Winslow is a better place now he believes that in some ways it is. He thinks it was wrong to close the police station and remembers Sergeant Gilchrist as an impressive character. George recalls a time when there were 14 pubs in Winslow and the tradition was for young men to see if they could have a drink in each one. Asked about the renaming of The Boot to The Devil in the Boot he believes it may have been during the 1980s but is unsure why a North Marston tradition should be remembered in Winslow. Originally the pub sign was a cavalier's boot with a spur on it.</p>
003  End 09.24	<p>George recalls his brother trying to buy three cottages next to the Baptist Chapel around 1959 and that they eventually sold for £750. Asked about 42 High Street he says that it was just a house, not a shop. His grandfather, who lived there, went for a daily drink at The Windmill. He recalls his father taking his brother to see the body of his grandfather just after he died. George says that his father returned to Winslow just after the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War and he tells the story of them obtaining one of the council houses in Western Lane, no. 28. He remembers Harry Bennett, who lived on the same road, who was the scoutmaster and took them to camp. George says that Harry worked on motor torpedo boats during the war, picking up and landing agents. He tells a story about Harry turning over his car in a ditch and about a scout camp at Lynmouth. George was briefly a cub-master after his first three years in the army.</p>