



## MELFORD MEMORIES

### Violet Hamilton [2023]

I was born in London on the 13th of September 1929. I had four sisters and four brothers. But one of them died before I was born when he was three years old, and at that time he was the eldest son, my parents pride and joy. I'm not sure whether it was measles or chicken Pox, it was something like that because they didn't have any vaccines or immunisation in those days back in the distant past.

It was a horrid childhood for all of us children and there was not much food. Any clothes were all hand me downs and also the shoes too. During the second world war, our home was bombed twice and we were lucky to survive as our houses received direct hits. It was in 1953 when my mother passed away, but I remember she had a very hard life.

Around this time, no one had money to pay for health services so the Government had to do something for the whole country because of the suffering. There was a great need for health support by doctors, dentist and nursing resulting in the N.H.S.

I worked in the school because I am trained as a children's nurse. Back in the day, during the last world war there were hundreds of children needing care and looking after, today many people would not know what I was talking about during this period. There used to be a great need for residential nursery schools also for people to train as a children's nurse. You have to do a year's residential training with babies and toddlers because they came from being abandoned or, babies whose mothers had TB, it was absolutely rife then much like Covid today. The mothers would have to go to a sanatorium for about a year. The babies would, if there's was no father or close family would come into a residential nursery. And it would be my job to look after them. The place where I was trained was like a mansion named Eastney in Ware Hertfordshire, and is still standing today. One of my sisters named Ivy, came with me when I left to go into training here, she said, "I'm not staying here at home", so she came with me, and the two of us were there for our year's training. Later after the war, my daughter and husband moved to Essex. So Bob my husband said, "I think we had better move too." Donald my son-in-law and Ann both were working as a Solicitors in Sudbury, and noticed that new houses were being built in Long Melford, and invited Bob and myself to take a look to see if we liked them. We both agreed that it is a lovely place in Melford to live so, we came here and it has been lovely.

My son Joe and his wife Leslie live near to Stanstead, and asked that we arrive at their house at 8.00am on three days per week to enable them to get to work early. Here my husband and I looked after our two grandchildren for them.

I found my life very happy living in the countryside in Long Melford. Finding that when we came most of the neighbours had just moved in like us. The neighbours were all very kind and we were able to make a lot of new friends. Now, they help me by getting my bits of shopping and things like that. Friends like Pauline and Alan who help me enormously.