

### BRINGING IN ENOUGH MONEY.

Few children in those days knew much about their people's financial status, that was just one of the things never discussed in front of the kids. Looking back however I realise they battled, and the stream of semi-patients that seem to have paraded through the house did so for financial reasons.

The first, longest staying, and therefore most important of these was Bridget. Marjorie either worked at, or she and her husband owned, an inn at Ringmore called Journey's End. She was Bridget's mother, and Bridget was born at Gabberwell under Doc's watchful eye. Ere the birth however - what a 'carry on'. Marjory's husband was away at war. Bridget's father was Cyril, the good-looking son of a wealthy farmer. Husband came home on leave to find a wife pregnant as shouldn't have been. Divorce followed - a nasty one where seeds and the like from the turn-ups of farmers trousers were isolated on the carpet of lady's bedroom - folk were a bit touchy about wives who carried on while husbands were doing their patriotic duty, naturally. All this upset endangered the pregnancy at the beginning, and the baby at the end. I can remember hearing 'raised voices' as my mother phoned said Cyril, told him to come and visit Marjorie pronto, bringing flowers, which he did. Thereupon my mother collared him and told him he was to promise Marjorie that he was going to marry her. Whether he did or not was his affair, but she was to be told this, to give her a measure of peace. Doc had never lost either a baby or mother in childbirth, and this was not about to be the first. Eventually the baby was safely delivered, but they never did marry. Baby, however was very, very premature, no toe or fingernails and tiny, tiny; my mum literally wrapped her in cottonwool. After the birth an ancient toothless old district nurse came visiting, and told my mum that she did know, didn't she, that that baby could not possibly live. Well survive she did, much to the nurse and every one else's amazement. My mother nursed her day and night by the iron stove to keep her warm.

As she was such a midget, said my mum, the only possible name for her was Bridget. Well Marjorie went back to Ringmore, and Bridget stayed with us. I can remember being jealous of Bridget. She stayed with us until she went to school where she boarded, and ran away at least twice to go back to Aunt Pam. Later there was an Elizabeth, and later still a Leslie. Both had something wrong with them but I don't remember what.

### EDUCATION

I do not suppose that the war can be held entirely responsible for what amounts to my general lack of education, but I guess it had quite a bit to do with it. First I was sent at a very tender age to what Hilde called a kindergarten. This was in Kingsbridge, which was regarded as safer than Gabberwell. There I boarded. The school was called Twyford. There were three other boarders, big girls, probably only about fourteen or so, but I thought they were huge. They did not take kindly to having a six year old in their midst and showed it in many ways. There was, however, a lovely, lovely old lady who was in charge of me. She was loving, giving, ample bosomed, and everything that was comfortable; a gem. This lady taught me to pray. I had never heard of Jesus, the friend that is with one all the time although you can't see him. I thought he was grand and prayed a lot even when I went home, which amused my mum no end. I have no idea how long I boarded there, or why I didn't go on staying there, or if there was a gap between the two but eventually I ended up staying with the Edwards family. He was a dentist in Kingsbridge. I then attended Twyford as a day child.

There were two Edwards children in the family, Peter and Janet. There was no love lost between us. It was a very proper household with the silver service at every meal. I rather suppose I was found to be a bit of a culture shock. Once a lady came to tea and to make conversation with me