

Memories of Ruth Brown, born and lived in Grappenhall all her life

"My earliest memories of The Heyes are of Parrs Drive leading up to the house in about 1952. We used to go on nature walks up there from the primary school. You had to get special permission from the Parr family to do so. When I got older I would sometimes go on my bike with friends and risk being shot at by the gamekeeper, John Power who lived in the keeper's cottage on the estate with his wife and two children, Philip and Edie. John Power was a taxidermist and kept a lot of stuffed animals in the cottage.

After John died his family kept the cottage on and Edie ran a successful poultry farm where many people came to buy their eggs and fowl. I remember Edie with her red hair and her pink dungarees and used to work for her in the school holidays. Edie kept Rhode Island Reds which were mostly free range, a few turkeys for Christmas and some ornamental pheasants which were not for eating. At Christmas time I remember Edie having to live in one of the buildings near the glasshouses to stop the turkeys being stolen.

In the 1960's the glasshouses were still intact. I remember Edie or her brother Philip telling me that they were coke fired from beneath and that in the Parrs' day they had been used for growing peaches, orchids and other exotic flowers as well as a vinery for grapes.