

## PART 7: THE EARLY SIXTIES (1960-1964)

### Chapter 74: Five-Year Diaries

During this period, both mum and grandad used five-year diaries. They had started this the previous year, in 1959, so each had one diary for 1959 to 1963 and another for 1964 to 1968.<sup>1</sup>

Grandad's first five year diary, the green [Leathersmith](#) one, was a Christmas gift in 1958 from mum, dad and Tricia. Mum's first five-year diary and grandad's second one were both red Collins diaries. Mum's was a gift from Tricia for her birthday in 1958.

Mum's second five-year diary, the white Letts one, was a Christmas gift in 1963.



Top – mum's and grandad's five-year diaries 1959-68  
Above left – annotation in grandad's first five-year diary  
Above right – sticker in mum's first five-year diary  
Below left – grandad's notes on cost of building bungalow in Drayton

Cost of Bungalows	
Address and Telephone Numbers	
Jan 27 1964 Paid Invoice for gas	100 0 0
Feb 21 Paid 1/2 Utility charges for 1963	2400 0 0
March 12 Paid 1/2 Utility charges for 1963	2400 0 0
April 5 Paid 1/2 Utility charges for 1963	2400 0 0
May 21 Paid 1/2 Utility charges for 1963	2400 0 0
June 12 Paid 1/2 Utility charges for 1963	2400 0 0
July 12 Paid 1/2 Utility charges for 1963	2400 0 0
Aug 12 Paid 1/2 Utility charges for 1963	2400 0 0
Sept 12 Paid 1/2 Utility charges for 1963	2400 0 0
Oct 12 Paid 1/2 Utility charges for 1963	2400 0 0
Nov 12 Paid 1/2 Utility charges for 1963	2400 0 0
Dec 12 Paid 1/2 Utility charges for 1963	2400 0 0
Total	2760 0 0

Cost of Bungalows	
Address and Telephone Numbers	
Jan 27 1964 Paid Invoice for gas	100 0 0
Feb 21 Paid 1/2 Utility charges for 1963	2400 0 0
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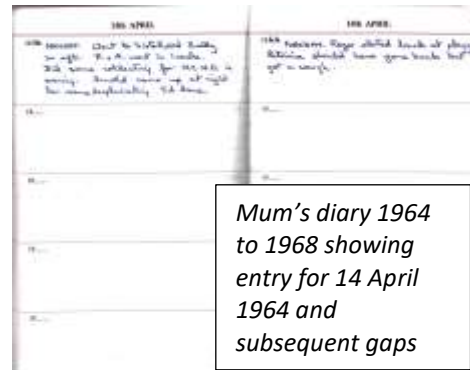
Mum's first five-year diary is particularly informative in that it has an extensive list of names and dates of birth. It also has details of some couples' wedding dates and some names and addresses. It also has a list of "gramophone records" that mum had. Her second five-year diary includes some names and addresses. Grandad's second five-year diary has a number of lists at the back including costs of building the bungalow in Drayton, gas and electric bills, rates and water rates, dates of replacing light bulbs, payments on two loans made to mum and dad, Alan's weight from October 1968 to January 1969, dates of mowing the lawns and petrol consumption of mower, cost of television and some details of rent received for properties in Victoria Road.

Mum's second five-year diary has large gaps in entries. The first of these during this period occurs from 14 April 1964. Although entries resume on 25 October 1964, they are quite sporadic from then onwards and there are no entries after 16 August 1967. Mum's next diary does not start until 1975. Why did mum stop writing her diary and then resume? I honestly don't know. It is possible that for

<sup>1</sup> Although mum's second diary, the white one, is mislabeled on the front as starting in 1963 and ending in 1966. That diary starts on 1 January 1964 and there are some entries for 1967.

some of the years she did keep a diary but that these were subsequently lost. However, this is not the case for the period up to the end of 1968 as she had a diary for that period but did not use it.

There may have been multiple factors that caused mum to stop writing her diary in April 1964. With three young children, and an active church and social life, she clearly had many other things on her plate! However, was that the whole reason? At the end of March 1964, there was a campaign at Mile Cross Methodist Church<sup>2</sup> led by Rev David Wheeler<sup>3</sup> and involving students.<sup>4</sup> Mum was involved in the organisation of this having students for meals at various times. On Saturday 28 March, there was a rally at chapel. Mum felt she should have responded by going forward. She noted having a long talk with David, presumably about this. The next day, Easter Sunday, mum went to communion “with David” and to evening service. She noted that it was very good but felt she was “trying too hard”.<sup>5</sup> On Easter Monday, she talked to David. On the Tuesday, she and dad had a “row” but they eventually “sorted things out” and she told him “everything”. The next day, dad came home from work at dinner time and they “sorted ourselves out – I think”. Mum also wrote a letter to John, one of the students. The next morning, Arnold [Clough]<sup>6</sup> came to the house “with letter”.<sup>7</sup> Mum talked to him for a long time and wrote to David at night. The next day, Friday, “had brief note from David. I was hurt & said I wouldn’t go to Mile X again. Arnold came & talked in aft. Went to C Practice. Then Arnold came & we told him everything. Feel forgiven now”.<sup>8</sup> Over the next few days, she discussed the issues with various people including grandma, Rev and Mrs Clough and Miss Walker.



Mum's diary 1964 to 1968 showing entry for 14 April 1964 and subsequent gaps

However, whatever the issue was between mum and dad, it appears to have been unresolved. She noted they had further rows on 8 and 12 April. After the latest of those, the Minister came up “and helped us sort ourselves out”. Two days after this, the diary entries stop. Was this cessation related to conflict between mum and dad? Possibly. However, although they did ultimately separate and divorce this was not for several years from this point. I was just about to turn four at this point so I am not sure how much I remember or from when. I certainly remember frequent and spectacular rows between my parents and that these stopped when my dad moved out.<sup>9</sup>

I also wonder about mum’s mental health at this point. Some of the thinking in the diaries is pretty hard to follow. This may be because only partial information was recorded or perhaps it was something more, particularly with subsequent events. From the diaries, I know that mum was taking “sleeping tablets” from at least 1961. Towards the end of this period, she noted feeling “depressed”.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter 79

<sup>3</sup> I found details of a David John Conway Wheeler on [My Methodist History](#) but he only entered the Ministry in 1980 so unlikely to be him. More promising, there was a David Wheeler who was Minister for the Church on [Rise Park](#) in Nottingham from when it opened in 1968. I also found [reference](#) to a Methodist Minister called David J Wheeler who celebrated 50 years of Methodist Ministry in 2017. If this was him, perhaps he was still a student when he led this campaign?

<sup>4</sup> Perhaps from Cliff College or somewhere similar. Names mum recorded included David, Graham, John, Paddy and Peter

<sup>5</sup> I don’t know what she meant by this.

<sup>6</sup> He may have been ordained in 1961 as I found a [note](#) celebrating his 60<sup>th</sup> year of ordination in 2021.

<sup>7</sup> I don’t know if this is the same letter or a different one.

<sup>8</sup> I have no idea what this is all about, i.e. what was in David’s note, why this hurt mum and why this made her react in terms of never going to Mile Cross again. Whatever the “everything” was she did not note this in the diary! Clearly, it involved something that mum considered wrong (hence the need to feel forgiven) and it seems to relate to her relationship with dad.

<sup>9</sup> Although they were replaced by other types of conflict which we will get to!

<sup>10</sup> On 23 December 1964, mum noted “felt depressed all day about having another baby”. This could mean that she wanted another baby and was depressed that that wasn’t happening or that she thought she was pregnant and was depressed by the thought. On Christmas Eve, she went to see Dr English “about baby”. She noted “only 5 weeks but wonder about the tablets I am taking they are OK he thinks. Felt better”. From this, it certainly seems she thought she was pregnant.