

# Ninety Years Of Age This Month

## Mrs. Hopkins Recalls Old Times

C.T. September 6, 1941

One of Christchurch's oldest inhabitants, Mrs. Sarah Hopkins, of "Dell View," Lodge Road, will celebrate her 90th birthday on 16th September, and still leads a very active life.

It was more than 53 years ago that Mr. and Mrs. Hopkins came to Christchurch; there were then only two or three houses in the Jumpers area, where Lodge Road now lies was rough common land and cornfields bordered Barrack Road. Mrs. Hopkins' husband, Mr. Robert C. Hopkins, who died in 1916, was a builder; he erected a number of houses in the district, including the house in Lodge road where Mrs. Hopkins still lives, and built the first shop in Barrack Road. This shop Mrs. Hopkins opened as a general store in 1887 and used to serve the Barracks. It was situated opposite where Devon Road is now.

Mrs. Hopkins also obtained the first delivery of letters in the district by a postman. The milkman used to bring the letters and they were often delayed. On one occasion a family party arrived on a visit before the letter announcing their impending arrival had come to hand. Mrs. Hopkins wrote to the Postmaster and in a few days Mr. Ted Mott, the postman, came whistling up the path with the letters. "He always whistled," said Mrs. Hopkins to our representative one day this week, "and he is still serving as a postman." Mrs. Hopkins also secured the re-opening of the Post Office in Barrack Road, saving a walk to the village of Iford, where the nearest office was situated. Mrs. Hopkins always believed in going to headquarters to get things done.

### A Wild Place.

"This was a wild place," said Mrs. Hopkins, "when we first came here; all around here was rough land covered with gorse and bracken and there were only two or three houses. The River Stour, when in flood used to come right up to the Barrack Road below Iford Bridge, and there was no transport into Bournemouth, then a small town. Her husband was for a time organist at Pokesdown Congregational Church and walked to and from the church.

Mrs. Hopkins has eight children living, nine grandchildren and four great grandchildren, one daughter lives with her. She keeps cheerful and looks on the bright side of life and enjoys good health and a sense of humour; when our representative called to see her she was busy picking fruit in the garden.

In 53 years Mrs. Hopkins has seen great changes a large residential district has arisen around her home, Bournemouth has crept over the fields right up to the Christchurch boundary, horses have almost disappeared and the trams have come and gone. Where the ripe corn waved in the breeze now stand shops, garages and dwelling houses, and Mrs. Hopkins still carries on the habits of an industrious life.