

NOTES FROM THORNHAM

This photo was taken for an *Ipswich Star* feature on the last meeting at Ipswich greyhound stadium before it closed for good in 1988. It shows Philip Cattermole wearing his habitual Trilby hat. He lived in Bramley Cottage, Gull Lane, Magna from the age of 5 in 1909 until his death in 1994, remaining something of a mystery to villagers. His father George rose to manage Red House and Grove Farms for Lord Henniker and was a much admired bell ringer. I'd like to think Philip inherited the mathematical talents necessary for bell ringing and used them in his career as bookmaker.

Greyhound racing was more popular than football before and after the Second World War and was the only place urban workers could legally bet until the arrival of betting shops in 1961, which ended most street and work-place betting previously conducted through the bookie's runner.

In his village life Philip married Blanche and their daughter Susan later lived in the Old Rectory, which Philip owned. She was a professional driver, delivering Volvo cars.

During the War betting was illegal and Philip became a postman. Joyce Mayes even remembers him delivering her engagement ring!

He was a talented athlete and an Ipswich Harrier, running for Suffolk, becoming county champion and winning many medals.

He also kept bees and sold honey. As well as using the large orchard at Bramley, he kept hives in the orchard of Nat Hawes in Parva. Nat's daughter Christine remembers as a child being warned to keep clear of the bees' flight-paths.

Philip was an early car owner, favouring Rovers and surfacing the lane as far as his cottage with gravel from the stream, over which he built a bridge of railway sleepers to replace the ford.

He is said to have been held up at gunpoint, losing both his takings and car. After his death the safe kept in Bramley was opened and found to be empty.

I am grateful to eagle-eyed Linda Ralph for spotting this photo and to Archant for waiving fees for reproduction here.

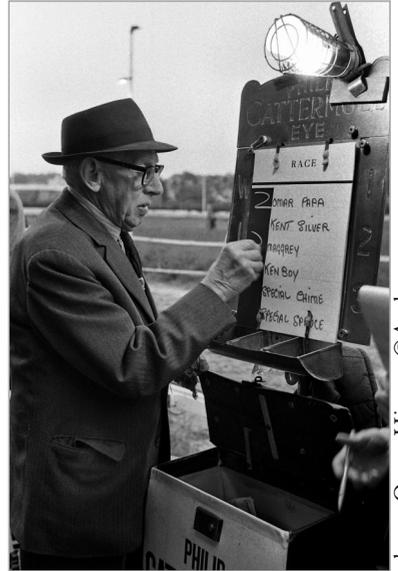


photo: Owen Hines, © Archant