

of Stroud and has resided at Paganhill for 59 years. She left the "Old Crown" in about 1948 after 33 years.

The other licensed premises in the village is the Paganhill Club, seat of many local government discussions. It is run by Mr. J. Kent, owner of a tobacconist business and a well-known sportsman.

Though cricket is synonymous with the locality, Paganhill also possesses a thriving Football Club, thanks to Mr. Albert Cole and the late Mr. W. E. Bassett. They organised the Club about 27 years ago and Mr. Cole was also responsible for re-organising it after the last war.

In connection with his club and many other organisations in Paganhill, Mr. Alec Jones can be readily recalled, although he has left the village in recent years.

One of the oldest residents, if not the oldest, in Paganhill is Mr. George Harper, who is 97 next month. He has lived in the village all his life—his father was one of the men who built Rodborough Fort.

Other elderly people of the village who, though not necessarily natives, have helped write its history, are Mrs. Blanch Rubber (88), who started out in life in domestic service at Hardwicke Court and Stratford Abbey, Mr. James Freeman, who was 80 this week, Mr. William Durham, resident here for over 50 years, and Miss Annie Blanch.

MISSION CHURCH

The Church of the Holy Spirit, a mission church to the Whiteshill parish, has been in existence for over 50 years, the last vicar being the Rev. R. F. Hibbs, who left the district about four years ago. Mr. G. D. Watson was secretary of the church for about five years and is also a former pro-warden, and he was followed by Mr. K. Morris. The present secretary is Miss M. Hicks.

The Baptist Chapel, a branch of the Baptist Church at John Street, Stroud, was founded in about the 1870's. At that time it was simply two thatched roofed cottages. It was not until about 20 years later that they were knocked into one building to form the present chapel.

Paganhill Chapel is noted locally for the enthusiasm of its Sunday School, which car-

blow and died of a broken heart.

The face of Paganhill today is changing rapidly with the ever increasing number of houses being built in the locality. This brief outline of the village may give some of the newcomers a realisation of the history they are inheriting. Everyone hopes they will live up to it.

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"Our Village" Series

PAGANHILL

20.4.56.

★ Used By Pirates ★ The Maypole

★ Visit By Famous Premier

A local mystery which has still not been wholly solved is the whereabouts of "the chapel of Pagunhull" referred to in the deed of endowment or composition of "the Chapel of Strode" (Stroud) in 1304.

Mr. Paul Hawkins Fisher, most famous of local historians, could not find the slightest trace, or even tradition, of the site on which it stood. He did, however, mention that Paganhill seems to have been a great place in early times, considering it had a chapel and a beneficiary clerk all to itself even before a provision was made for maintaining a resident priest at Stroud.

Some years after Mr. Fisher published his "Notes and Recollections" the undoubted remains of a chapel were found at Erownshill, Chalford, and it has been suggested that "the chapel of Pagunhull" was, in fact, none other than the chapel that once stood at Brownshill—or Pagonshill as the village is alternatively called in a deed of 1771.

Paganhill (variously spelt Pakenhill, Pakenhyll, Pagenile, Pagunhulle or Pagunull) "undoubtedly," according to Fisher, "derived its name from its having been used by the piratical invading Danish hosts, constantly coming up the Severn. The are always referred to as pagans in the Saxon chronical, being literally heathens and worshippers of Odin and Thor."

IN BISLEY PARISH

Like Stroud, the village was once in the parish of Bisley. In the will (dated 1609) of John Turner, a yeoman, of Througham, Bisley, he left to his son, John, all his lands lying in the parish of Stroud and Pakenhyll. In connection with Richard de Bislev, who held the Manor of Over Court in the thirteenth century, Miss A. M. Rudd, in her "Historical Records of Bisley," states that a charter was witnessed by, among others, John de la Strode, William le Prout, Walter de Paganhull, Henry

de Chalford and Faber of Bysrugge (Bussage).

Paganhill was later one of the four tithings in the parish of Stroud along with Upper or Over Lypiatt, Lower or Nether Lypiatt and Steanbridge.

One of Paganhill's claims to fame has been its maypole—today a local landmark. There have been seven or eight maypoles here. On one occasion, it has been stated, two poles were lashed together to make it well over 100 feet. The present pole is about 87 feet high. The previous one, cut at Cranham, was 120 feet high when felled. Even after trimming it was still over 100 feet above ground.

Whit-Monday was the usual festival on which the inhabitants erected their maypole, or painted it, and hung it with fresh garlands, but it was not always a scene of merrymaking. Fisher records that on May 20, 1804, the pole fell down and killed two children. The incident prevented all further proceedings that day and also the erection of other maypoles for several years.

Mr. Charles Offley, of Uffield, then provided a well and water pump and erected it on the site of the old maypole. On his death, however, another pole was set up near the site of the old one and the pump fell into disuse.

PAGANHILL'S "MAYOR"

The present chairman of the Maypole Committee is Mr. E. J. (Ted) Wheeler, Paganhill's "mayor" in the revival of the ancient festivities during the last war. He has lived here for over 40 years and is now president of the Football Club and chairman of the Village Hall.

Before leaving the subject of the pole we must mention Mr. C. E. Birch, the Lansdown newsagent, who has taken a great interest in the history of the pole and has many records relating to it at his home.

The Manor of Pakenhill was held by the family of Warner for several generations until, under the will of

Thomas Warner who died in 1736, it became the property of Henry Wyatt. He died in 1784 and his estates were purchased by Mr. Richard Cook, of Lodgemoor, who erected the mansion of Farmhill. Mr. Cook did not live to occupy the mansion but dying left Richard Cook, his eldest son, his successor.

Later, in 1833, it was purchased by another Henry Wyatt (no relation to the first) who erected an imposing stone arch in recognition of the abolition of negro slavery in the British Colonies, the inscription on which is dated August 1, 1834. More recently the Americans sought to purchase this arch which today stands at the entrance to Paganhill Estate.

THE GRACES

As one enters Paganhill from the town, the Stroud Cricket Club's ground is a rammar landmark. On this ground all three of the famous Grace brothers—W. G., E. M. and G. F.—played. G. F. Grace, the youngest, was playing here only a few days after holding the highest catch ever seen at Lords' in the Test Match of 1880. Legend has it that he slept in a bed at the "Royal George", Stroud, caught pneumonia and died a few days later.

Harry Huggins was a professional for Stroud. His daughter, Mrs. Lionel Smith, and her late husband, kept the "Rose Inn" at Paganhill for some years.

Villagers will also remember the former licensee of the "Old Crown", Mr. Joby Bayliss. His wife, Elizabeth, still lives in the locality—at Puckshole. She is a native of Stroud and has resided at Paganhill for 59 years. She left the "Old Crown" in about 1948 after 33 years.

The other licensee premises in the village is the Paganhill pub and many local gov-

tries off a remarkable number of the annual Scripture Scholarships run in conjunction with the Sunday School Union. Present secretary of the School is Miss E. L. Tyler, the primary section leader being Miss M. King. Mr. R. Blake-man has been superintendent since the departure of Mr. C. Glastonbury.

Field Place goes way back into the village's history. This property was, for many years owned by the Field family. From Thomas Field, who died in 1510, Field Place descended through Richard Field (died 1693), Edward Field (died 1736) and Thomas Field who held it in 1779 to the descendants of John de la Field Phelps, of Dursley. Then it passed by sale to Charles Stanton in 1840 and is now the residence of Mrs. A. W. Stanton.

PRIME MINISTER

Mrs. Stanton's late husband will be remembered as a staunch Liberal, and it was to Field Place that Lloyd George, the famous first World War Prime Minister, came to speak in the '20's. Mr. Charlie Allen, well-remembered Liberal M.P. for Stroud, also lived in the neighbourhood.

The congregation of St. Alban's Church, Stroud, have reason to remember the generosity of the late Mr. Stanton. He was also chairman of the Stroud Beach for many years.

No mention of Paganhill is complete without reference to the late Mr. Victor Evans, who owned the garage near the maypole. He built up the business from nothing only to lose everything when transport was nationalised. He left the district after that blow and died of a broken heart.

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