

Our Village Series

THRUPP

- ★ *The Haunted House*
- ★ *World Famous Guernsey Herd*
- ★ *When the Phoenix came*

THE famous Haunted House—Nether Lypiatt Manor—lies in the northern corner of Thrupp Parish. One man who doesn't believe in the haunting is Mr. F. T. Hammond, the Chalford historian, who at a Rotary Club luncheon in 1952 described his researches into the story of the Haunted House.

Mr. Hammond attributed its eerie name to nothing more than its abandoned and empty appearance before the first World War. "I remember it as a small boy as a most forbidding place," he said. "Sheep were in the forecourt, the gates were there, the ground was like a golf bunker, and the windows barricaded and shuttered. When a place is shuttered and barred nothing is more productive of stories of mystery."

Mr. Hammond said he had spoken to people who had slept in every bedroom in the house and they had never seen anything. There was a story that Judge Coxe's old horse "Wag" had been seen on the stairs but he had never met anyone who had seen it. When the house was restored some 35 years ago two bedrooms were made into a large drawing room, and in one of the rooms a son of Judge Coxe's had hung himself and, although Mr. Hammond had never heard of his ghost appearing, he suggested it provided grounds for a story if one liked to make it so.

SENTENCED TO DEATH

The story of Nether Lypiatt

valuable asset to sale. This led to the challenge to Mr. Hammond to work on the pedigree and which he prepared from the time of the Femes in 1304 through its rebuilding by Judge Coxe (in its present Queen Anne style instead of the old Cotswold style, much to Mr. Hammond's regret) until recent times.

The late Mrs. Gordon Woodhouse, the well-known harpsichord player, lived at Nether Lypiatt Manor until her death a few years ago. Lord Barrington, who was responsible in no small way for the beautiful gardens, followed. The present owner is Mr. G. Nettlefold, who recently became engaged to Miss Ann Roberts, of Beverston, a niece of Mr. Anthony Kershaw, M.P.

HALF OF BRIMSCOMBE

Although Thrupp looks a comparatively small place the Parish Council controls quite a large area including half of Brimscombe. The boundary runs along the River Frome and then crosses the main road just beyond Brimscombe Station. On the other side the boundary with Stroud crosses the main road by the Malakoif Inn.

Under the chairmanship of Mr. P. F. Lewey the Parish Council maintains its reputation of really looking after Parish affairs. It was about 1897 that the Parish Council, through the R.D.C., brought mains sewage to the Parish—though it took 30 years to pay off the debt. One of the

bathing pontoon—very popular with swimmers, and the canal was excellent for fishing. Today the Canal is a "stagnant mess" which many residents would like to see cleared up. The canal, part of the Thames and Severn Canal, had a heavy barge traffic at one time. Where the Brimscombe S.M. School now stands there used to be a wharf for the barges, and further down the valley there was a barge building yard.

London-born and London-bred, Mr. P. F. Lewey is one of the best-known and best-loved men in the district. He first came to the district with the firm he was working for in London—George Waller and Co. Ltd., who had taken over the 200 years old iron foundry, the Phoenix Ironworks. For the next 50 years until July this year, as accountant, commercial manager and finally as company secretary, he served Waller's of Thrupp.

But it is not only through his work that Mr. Lewey has made so many friends, for he has been a member of the Parish Council since 1924. For

Congress. He still finds time for innumerable local committees and councils. He is a member of Thrupp Parish Council and fought a by-election to gain a seat on Stroud R.D.C.

WORLD FAMOUS

The sale of Nether Lypiatt Manor in October, 1955 meant the loss of 45 acres to Mr. G. R. Cobb, of "Steepways", who had been a tenant by private agreement. Mr. Cobb, who had founded the Toadsmoor herd of Guernsey cattle—one of the finest in the world—arranged to give the herd to the Northamptonshire Institute of Agriculture. Founded in 1932, the herd had been built up by a policy of line breeding to one famous cow, "Mayflower of Maple Lodge". The average milk yield for each cow has exceeded 1,000 gallons per annum.

Eighty-six year-old Mr. John Cousins, of Thrupp, was for 30 years the licensee of the "Waggon and Horses". During this time he ran from the Inn to the Church gates at Minchinghampton in 1½ minutes—a

the firm has begun to supply products for other purposes, namely: — prematic handling plant, sewerage purification plant, chemical plant, etc.

A "25 Year Club" has been recently formed and all members of the firm with 25 or more years' service became members and were presented with gold watches. Subsequent employees will automatically become members and receive watches. The present membership is 37.

The works have been largely rebuilt since the war and plans are afoot for a new office block and canteen. spanner, and many of these were made at the Phoenix.

Throughout the whole of its existence of about 100 years, the firm has been connected with the gas industry. In recent years, in order not to rely solely on the gas industry, Phoenix. Mr. Budding also invented the first adjustable Budding who worked at the



A photograph of Thrupp and the Golden Valley taken from Butterrow.

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The gates at Nether Lypiatt are no longer the famous gates which gave rise to the legend associated with Judge Cox. The story was, at the time the judge was rebuilding the house he had sentenced to death a blacksmith with whom he was supposed to have come to terms, that if the blacksmith completed a set of gates and screen in accordance with a design to be supplied to him, he would secure commutation of the sentence. The story went that the gates were executed and so was the blacksmith.

Another story associated with the house, discredited by Mr. Hammond, was that seven skeletons found buried in a radial formation under the lawn while the house was being restored, were Civil War relics. He thought it unlikely there would be burials outside a front door. It almost looked like some ceremonial burial and he felt it was possibly some prehistoric burial, though the design was not in the form of the usual long and round barrows.

When the house was being restored at the time of the first World War a carved stone about 2 feet 6 ins. square was found built into the house backwards, being used as a building stone and not as an ornamentation. It was his opinion that the stone was the only real remains of the former house before it was rebuilt in 1700.

The new owner had bought the house and was having it restored and furnished in the period with the intention of selling it again. Therefore a strong pedigree from 1300 to the present time would be a

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The chairman of the Parish Council before Mr. Lewey was Mr. E. A. Chambers, a member of the well-known Thrupp family which lived at Thrupp House. Once a prosperous cloth mill the Chambers' Mill today lies derelict, and Thrupp House has been converted into flats. After the War Mr. W. R. Hammond, the Gloucestershire and England cricketer, was one of the tenants.

The village of Thrupp (or The Thrupp as it used to be called) lies two miles south east of Stroud and consists of two distinct clusters of houses, known as Near Thrupp and Far Thrupp.

Two theories are offered for the origin of the name Thrupp. The first suggests the name is derived from the Icelandic "Throp" or "Thrup" meaning a hill or elevated spot. The second and more likely suggestion is that the name comes from the Danish language meaning collection of men or houses—a village.

This piece of sound philosophy belongs to the village:

"Nothing put down, nothing take up,
Say the boys of The Thrupp."

In Samuel Rudder's 18th century history of Gloucestershire "the Thrupp" is mentioned in a list of "several other good houfes and eftates" in Stroud Parish. It is listed as being the property of "James Clutterbuck, eqf."

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bathing pontoon—very popular with swimmers, and the canal was excellent for fishing. Today the Canal is a "stagnant mess" which many residents would like to see cleared up. The canal, part of the Thames and Severn Canal, had a heavy barge traffic at one time. Where the Brimscombe S.M. School now stands there used to be a wharf for the barges, and further down the valley there was a barge building yard.

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But it is not only through his work that Mr. Lewey has made so many friends, for he has been a member of the Parish Council since 1924. For over 30 years, he has argued the rights and wrongs of footpaths, lighting, overhanging trees and all the hundred and one things that concern the parish councils of rural England.

It is a far cry from Mr. Lewey's upbringing. He was born at Dulwich, one of the younger members of a family of twelve. He was educated in Peckham in the last years of Queen Victoria's reign, and went to work for Waller's on January 6th, 1900.

Although Thrupp is a separate civil parish it comes in the ecclesiastical parish of Holy Trinity, Stroud, but has its own Church—All Saints—built in 1889 at a cost of £1,000, a distinctive building of corrugated iron. The curate in charge is the Rev. R. J. Elliott. The far end of Thrupp civil parish runs in to Brimscombe village and comes under Bisley ecclesiastical parish. The first Sunday School was begun at Thrupp in 1784 by the Rev. William Ellis, the officiating Curate of Stroud Parish.

INTRODUCING MR. GWILLIAM

Cowboys galloped across the silent screen. Bending low over the string bass in the pit, his fingers tensed on the bow, stood a young well-built Welsh miner. A nod from the conductor would send his bow across the long strings. In the "good old days" before "talkies" the pit orchestra supplied the music for gun battle or love scene.

Today Mr. John Vernon (Jack) Gwilliam is a man whose name is more usually allied with the work of Trade Unions and a string of councils and Committees than the orchestra of a theatre. But it was this early working and playing with the sturdy Welsh miners and tinsplate workers, backed by two generations whose energies had been largely directed into the Trade Union movement, which helped to mould and set the tone of his life in which his union work has spread from the local level to the Trades' Union

A photograph of Thrupp and the Golden Valley taken from B

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Eighty-six year-old Mr. John Cousins, of Thrupp, was for 30 years the licensee of the "Waggons and Horses". During this time he ran from the Inn to the Church gates at Minchinhampton in 16½ minutes—a feat which has never been equalled. By doing this he won a wager of half a sovereign. But he lost half a sovereign when he backed a young athlete to run the distance in the same time, for the athlete took half a minute longer.

AT THE GATE

When calling at the Phoenix Iron Works the first person you'll meet will be Mr. Frank Savage at the gate. Mr. Savage, who has lived at Thrupp since 1915 and before that at Minchinhampton, has worked at the Phoenix for the past 36 years. He has been a member of the Parish Council for 30 years and is a vice-president of the Brimscombe and Thrupp branch of the British Legion.

Some exciting times at the turn of the century are recalled by Mr. Savage, in the days when the Thrupp road was the scene of keen rivalry between several firms of horse-drawn buses. At least three companies, Townsends, Eddles and Daniels ran buses from Stroud to Chalford. Starting from outside the "Stroud News" offices the fare to Chalford was 3d., and Brimscombe 2d. It was a case of first come first served, and although the buses were supposed to run at different times it often happened that rival buses raced to be first to pick up the passengers at the next stop.

Thrupp lost one of its most popular industries in 1916 when Smith's Brimscombe Brewery closed down.

PHOENIX FOUNDRY

Founded at Southwark, London, in about 1851, the firm of George Waller and Co. moved its foundry to the Phoenix Foundry, Thrupp, in 1866, and the rest of the works moved to Thrupp a few years later. Although the firm only moved to Thrupp in 1866, the Phoenix Iron Works has a much longer history.

There is a cast iron plaque in the foundry dated 1828. In 1832 the first lawn mower was invented by a man named

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