

From V. Goulding,
Stroud Correspondent.

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An architectural gem in a setting of gorgeous Cotswold scenery is to be sold. Whoever acquires it will be tempted to bring to realisation a dream of a man who died 30 years ago.

The dreamer was the late Mr. William Leigh, lord of the manors of Nymphsfield and Woodchester and grandfather of the present owners. He possessed the 1000-acre valley that comprises Woodchester Park and 17 years before his death he started to build an imposing mansion of stone in Gothic style.

Intending to revive the spirit of the Middle Ages he planned to include among the 25 rooms his own laundry, brewery, dairy and bakery. Gargoyles and arched windows were part of the architectural design and in the main buildings there was to be a beautiful chapel.

The dream was only partly realised for when Mr. Leigh died the mansion was unfinished. There was no front door although provision was made for it; the staircases were without bannisters and the chapel, which had a ceiling of beautiful fan tracery, had walls of

work done on the building during the 17 years that

the work was in progress and the designer, determined to have perfection, brought over craftsmen from France, who had been working on the cathedral of ~~the~~ Notre Dame to assist.

It was his wish that his son should carry on the work after his death but for various reasons this was not done and for 30 years the mansion has stood unoccupied -- an unfinished symphony in stone.

The whole of the estate is for sale. It includes, in addition to the mansion, a fifteen roomed house, a number of small farms and other buildings and seven lakes. It is a renowned beauty spot and two or three times each year it is thrown open to the public.

The owners of the property are ~~the~~ two elderly sisters, the Misses Leigh who for several years have directed their energies to helping charitable Catholic causes. Their hope is that the estate will be acquired by a Catholic body to be used for religious purposes.

The local agents for the sale are Messrs. Davis Champion and Payne and we understand that a five figure reserve price has been set on the estate.