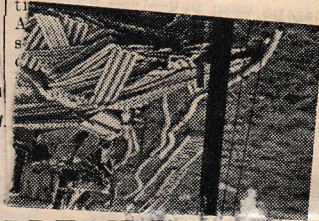


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## BREAK-UP OF ESTATE

IT would not be true to say that it was entirely a Selsley affair. Yet it concerned Selsley more than anywhere else. And while there were outsiders — representatives of the farmers, timber merchants, speculators — among the assembly nearly filling the Church Institute last Friday afternoon, this was clearly the biggest Selsley meeting ever held in the town of Stroud.

Selsley was there to take part or watch the biggest break-up of nearly a whole village, and the biggest sale in this district, for many a year. For Friday, October 10th, was the day the 591 acres estate of the Marling family — Stanley Park — was to be sold in the public auction.

But it was far from being the sensational occasion that might be supposed. Bidding, with the isolated exception, could never be said to be keen. Indeed the top-line events of the afternoon were negative from the sale point of view — the Mansion House did not reach the reserve figure and the biggest bargain of the day was a cottage which sold for £30.

Elderly Miss A. Porter was one of the villagers seated amongst the crowd when Mr. Graham Perry, F.A.I., the auctioneer of Messrs. Jackson-Stops (Cirencester), announced Lot 41, No. 12 School Square, Selsley, comprising a living room, scullery and two bedrooms. It was her home.

Too shy to bid she sat through the silence which followed Mr.

Perry's invitation to do so. Then unmistakably the voice of Mr. Harry King, one of the four tenant farmers on the estate who had all bought their farms: "I bid £30 for the tenant." Any further bid? No. "Sold to Mr. King for £30 for the tenant," said Mr. Perry and Miss Porter joined the band of tenants who had bought their own homes.

In accordance with the policy of the Ashdale Land and Property Co. Ltd., the investment and development company which acquired the estate in July, all tenants were given the first opportunity of purchase some six weeks before the sale and consequently in addition to the farms the number of

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## STANLEY PARK SALE

cottages disposed of before the auction was running into two figures. And when Mr. Perry opened the sale precisely as the Parish Church clock struck 2.15 a notice pinned to the Institute wall declared that 27 lots of the 54 in the catalogue had been sold.

That every tenant had had his chance of buying was the first thing Mr. Perry made clear in his peroration and went on to say that if advantage had not been taken of that opportunity they would still have a chance. And some of them took it.

### MOST IMPORTANT LOT

The sale began. Within a matter of minutes the most important lot of the afternoon—Lot 1, the Mansion House, with its seven flats (two with vacant possession) and grounds and an income of nearly £1,000 a year—had been offered and withdrawn. Bidding began at £2,000, moved quickly to £2,500, £3,000, £3,500, £3,750. . . £4,000. . . "This is ludicrous," said the auctioneer as the bidding flagged . . . £4,100 . . . and there it stuck.

"I bid £5,000 for my clients and withdraw the lot; we cannot let it go at that figure, I'm afraid," said Mr. Perry.

Lot 2, the first cottage to be offered, went from £100 to £210 to "the lady on the right"—Mrs. D. H. Homan, a London woman who lives at 1, Westview, Ebley, with her family and who was to have the distinction of purchasing more lots than anyone else during the afternoon with four more cottages at £50 apiece. She had bought them as a speculation, she said afterwards.

Highest bid of the day was for Pen Wood, more than 78 acres mainly of well grown beech trees. Bidding began at £8,000 rose first by £500's and then £250's to £11,750, which was below the reserve, and the auctioneer bid £13,000 for his clients and the lot was withdrawn.

Keenest bidding was for the Old Church Farmhouse—a Cotswold style building at Selsley West with some eight main rooms. First offer was for £500. In five bids it reached £700 and that appeared to be the finish. Then £710, in £10 and £5 bids to a steady £800. Finish again, as the auctioneer pressed for another £10, "£5 then," and there was a laugh. To £840. . . pause. . . "Well at £840. . ." "£850" and another laugh. Another steady climb to £885 with noticeably longer intervals. The bidding dragged on to £895, £900 and £905 . . . and at £905 the lot was sold to Mr. Oliver Daniels, the tenant (but now the owner) of the nearby Red Hill Farm.

### VACANT POSSESSION

Only two houses had the "magical words, 'vacant possession'." One was the Selsley cottage sold to Mrs. Homan for £210 and the other Middle Lodge, Selsley, sold to Mr. J. Williams for £2,000.

There was no bid for The Cottage, adjoining Selsley Common near the church. Marling House began at £500 and was withdrawn at £1,400. Sandpits Cottage, Middle-  
yard, was sold to the tenant, Mr. W. G. Clapton, at £100. A block of three stone cottages, Nos. 29/31 Selsley West was sold to Mr. E. L. Workman for £170. Enderley House, Selsley, was withdrawn at £1,300. The Green at £1,200, Enderley Cottage at £1,000, and Dudbridge Mills without a bid. The market garden adjoining Stanley Park was bought by Messrs. Winterbotham, Ball and Gadsden for £900. Selsley allotments went at £110 to Mr. F. J. Hogg, and Mr. E. Hampshire, of Park Road, Dudbridge bought Dudbridge Lodge for £150 and No. 1 Amberley Cottages for £60.

In all 30 of the 31 cottages offered were sold. Only 5 of the 12 larger houses and residences were sold (two at the sale).

In little more than an hour the business had been completed.

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