

"Our Village" Series

Continuing

S. N. & J. AUGUST 30, 57.

CAINSCROSS & EBLEY

* In His Ninety-Fifth Year * Founding Of Co-operative Society. * Premises Burnt Out

THE most notable personality in Cainscross is Mr. Bramwell Hudson, O.B.E., of Downfield, Stroud, who will be celebrating his 95th birthday on January 9 next year.

A keen public worker, Mr. Hudson joined the Cainscross Parish Council in 1894 when it was first formed and stayed with it until 1936 when it was abolished, acting as its chairman for many years.

He also served as a member of Stroud Rural District Council for a very long period, occupying the chair from 1928-1946, 18 years, by far the longest period in the Council's history.

Mr. Hudson took a strong line against the extension of the boundaries of the urban district of Stroud in 1936, and in an interview two years ago he said: "I have always been very fond of my old parish of Cainscross. There was always a good deal of public spirit in the parish. Victory Park is a very real example. I was chairman of the organising committee and I think it was really a remarkable achievement."

One very unusual feature of Mr. Hudson's career in local government is that he never had a single vote cast against his re-election.

This fine old man came to Cainscross in the eighties of last century from Yorkshire as an assistant manager of the Cainscross and Ebley Co-operative Society, afterwards becoming its general manager for many years.

Mr. Hudson has probably held more public offices than any man living in the district. He was a Justice of the Peace, first chairman of the Stroud Water Board, and before he resigned office, he saw the start of the big rural sewerage scheme, one of his life's ambitions.

He was also a vice-chairman of the Stroud Gas Company, a director of Stroud Building Society and

thrift, or indeed, any movement which tended to improve the workers' lot. He was one of the pioneers of the Cainscross and Ebley Co-operative Society.

Enquiries were made as to a suitable site for the first store and the spot finally decided upon was the site of the present grocery department, then a small shop, that had been vacated by Mr. John Hall, grocer and baker, and owned by Mr. Moseley, a Cainscross gentleman.

FIRST MANAGER

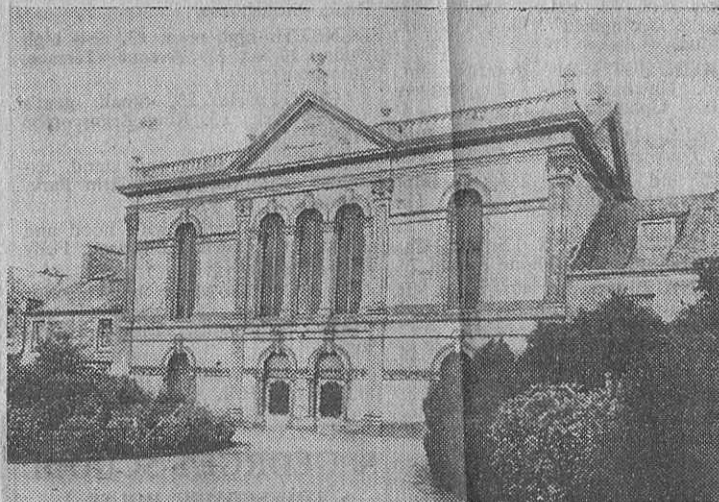
The first manager was Mr. Maurice Gorton, of The Thrupp. A baker was engaged and Mr. J. Roome, the Secretary, was deputed to assist in the shop when necessary. On Tuesday, June 16, 1863, the store opened and the first day's sales amounted to £3 8s. 11½d.

Towards the end of 1867 the Society received a severe setback. The shop premises were completely burnt out. Practically the whole of the stock was destroyed in addition, and it was found that the insurance did not quite cover it.

Arrangements were immediately made for temporary premises, however, and for some time business was carried on in the coach house of the "Golden Cross," which stood partly on the site of the present premises.

Fortunately there came an offer from the owner of the burnt out premises to sell them and land behind it reaching to the canal for £550, an offer which was accepted with fervour by most members. The new building was eventually finished and proved to be more capacious than the former one had been. The Society was back on its feet again.

Since those early days the Society has made great strides and now dominates the co-operative movement in and around Stroud.



EBLEY CHAPEL

Mr. Parsons found time to write and speak against what he believed to be false doctrine and corrupt practices of the State Church. He laboured for the abolition of slavery and the repeal of the Corn Laws and became known as "The Friend of the People."

Many will remember the ministry of the Rev. Robert Nott, who came to Ebley Congregational Church in 1889 to act as assistant minister and afterwards its minister, setting up a long service record which finally ended on his retirement in 1936. During this time Mr. Nott was well-known for his work on behalf of many local organisations, particularly the Stroud General Hospital and the old Stroud Literary Society.

Close to Ebley Chapel is Ebley School, and, so to speak, the two have grown together. The work of Mr. Henry Webb, pioneering Ebley schoolmaster, has never been forgotten. He was described as a "prince among teachers" a title well-deserved when one examines how this remarkable man laboured to teach his pupils under the most difficult circumstances. In his day the thirst for knowledge was a vital influence among working class people and the lengths to which hardworking youths and girls would go to get instruction in the "Three Rs" is almost unbelievable in these less energetic times.

Head of Ebley School today is Mr. H. L. Dean, noted for his many public services and also for

formerly known as Chestnut Farm, Ebley, and built the premises for the slaughtering and preparation of meat which is still much the same now as it was then. It is thought that a large barn attached to Chestnut Farm now forms part of the cooling hall of the abattoir.

In 1927 the business passed into the hands of Farrow & Company, and they were in control until 1944. When the second World War came the abattoir was requisitioned by the Ministry of Food, Farrow and Co. acting as their contractors until 1944. In that year the abattoir was purchased by Stroud Urban District Council, who continued to act as representatives of the Ministry until 1955 when all control of meat marketing ended.

For some years the late Mr. W. A. Hudson, chief inspector to Stroud U.D.C., supervised the slaughtering at the abattoir and, on his retirement in 1951, Mr. G. G. Critchley, the Council's present chief inspector, took over.

After derequisitioning the U.D.C.

leased the abattoir to the Cotswold Wholesale Meat Co. Ltd., which is made up of local butchers who hold shares in it, Mr. R. H. Hale being chairman of the directors and Mr. W. Pearce managing director.

Under the new Company the abattoir, now almost 40 years old, continues to prove its usefulness. It is serving a population of approximately 100,000 people, meat going from Ebley not only to Stroud, Nailsworth and the surrounding villages, but also to places like Tetbury, Dursley and Thornbury. Very few private slaughter houses remain and slaughtermen are few and far between nowadays.

In an ordinary week the average numbers of livestock handled at Ebley are in the region of 60 cattle, 200 sheep, 10 to 15 calves and 30 to 40 pigs.

The health department of Stroud U.D.C. is proud of the fact that every carcass at the abattoir is seen by a qualified meat inspector before being sent out to the shops.

KEPT FRESH

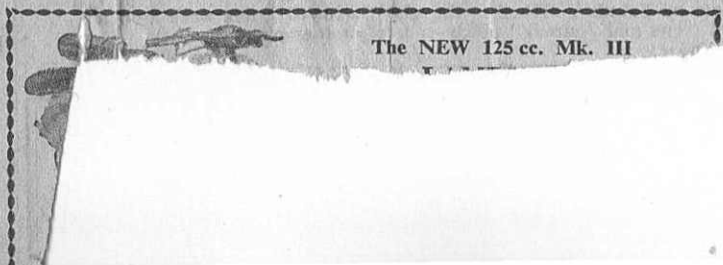
The new company has installed what is known as a "cool room" in which meat can be hung at a temperature just above freezing and kept in a good condition until required. By this means it is possible to hang meat over a weekend or holiday without deterioration. Another improvement has been the installation of a "deep freeze" for the storage of frozen lamb and similar meat products.

The foreman at the abattoir is Mr. Ernie Jefferies, who has been employed there ever since the premises opened. He worked originally for Mr. G. Luker, the butcher, who had his shop in Cainscross where Dyers now is.

When Mr. Luker sold his shop and assisted with the administration of the abattoir, just after the first World War, Mr. Jefferies went to work there. He has never changed his employment.

To be continued

The NEW 125 cc. Mk. III



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He was also a vice-chairman of the Stroud Gas Company, a director of Stroud Building Society and a Committee member of Stroud Hospital.

"AS OLD AS THE FAMILY"

Mr. Hudson once said "Co-operation is no new doctrine or faith and as a principle is as old as the family. Indeed the more closely we look into the facts of life the more clearly we perceive the enormous advantage which arises out of the fact that, through the necessities of their existence, co-operation is unconsciously forced upon men."

Which brings us to the "Cainscross and Ebley." Over the years the Co-operative Society there has become increasingly important, and there is no doubt that it adds a great deal to the importance and prosperity of the villages it takes its name from.

Some 40 to 50 people attended a preliminary meeting held at the Ebley British School in 1862 with the intention of forming the Society. Among those present were Mr. H. Weight who apparently thought of the idea when he saw some co-operative movement pamphlets on a table in the waiting room of a Bristol railway station. Names were invited and 43 answered and as many £1 shares were promised to be taken.

Also actively associated with the movement was Mr. Henry Webb of Ebley School. Mr. Webb had a deep sympathy with all efforts for

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IN THE DAYS OF GEORGE III

The fellowship at Ebley Congregational Church—still generally known as "Ebley Chapel"—dates back to the days of George III, and to the time when England was at war with France, and Napoleon leading his armies in various conquests.

A group of worshippers, not prepared to conform with the Church of England mode of worship, used to gather in an old barn then on the site of the present church.

It was not long before a place of worship was urgently needed, and eventually the original chapel was opened in 1797. It was enlarged in 1801. In early years there were many difficulties, mostly financial, and in the first 29 years there is record of only one resident minister, John Brown, who served for seven years.

In due course it was deemed advisable to join the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion, which consists of a group of churches owing its foundation to Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, a great 18th century evangelist.

Reference has already been made to the Rev. Benjamin Parsons, who came to Ebley in 1826, and remained until his death in 1855. His work as pastor, preacher, pioneer of education and writer, made a lasting impression on the neighbourhood.

Apart from his ministerial duties,

vital influence among working class people and the lengths to which hardworking youths and girls would go to get instruction in the "Three Rs" is almost unbelievable in these less energetic times.

Head of Ebley School today is Mr. H. L. Dean, noted for his many public services and also for his keen interest in sport. Mr. Dean never gives up advocating hockey as the ideal winter game!

SUFFER THE LITTLE ONES...

Any reference to Ebley history would be incomplete without a note about the home for little children in the very centre of the village. It was once the mansion of one of the famous Gyde family but, in modern times, it has become part of the organisation of the National Children's Home which also controls the Gyde Home at Painswick.

Yearly, the fetes at the Ebley Home are great crowd-drawers and, although considerable sums of money are raised, the fetes encourage the general public to come along and see how the little ones live. Their happy faces and well-clad forms are sufficient advertisement of the excellent conditions under which they live.

EBLEY ABATTOIR

Ebley Abattoir, headquarters of a thriving butchery business almost in the centre of the village, is familiar to all who know the district but few realise that it began as the result of an effort by local farmers to meet the needs of a growing populace.

It was just after the first World War that the Mid-Gloucestershire Farmers' Co-operative Society was formed, early directors including Mr. R. B. Martin, of Westrip, and the late Mr. W. F. B. Warman. They obtained a site on what was



EBLEY ABATTOIR in the very early days. Standing with the horse and cart in the foreground is the late Mr. Alfred Skinner, of Town Farm, Bisley, and in the background, near the motor van, is Mr. Ernie Jefferies, the present foreman slaughterer at the abattoir.