

"Our Village" Series

Concluding

"STROUD NEWS"
15.3.57.
SAPPERTON

& FRAMPTON MANSELL

- ★ Gateway to the Golden Valley
- ★ Visited by King Charles I
- ★ The "Too-strong" Harvest Drink
- ★ When it's Candle Time at "The Crown"

SAPPERTON, gateway to the Golden Valley, is one of the few villages on the River Frome to escape industrialisation during the 19th century. At Sapperton the valley turns sharply northwards and both the railway and the canal burrow beneath the beechwoods.

Arthur Mee wrote: "Five miles from Cirencester, five wonderful miles, Sapperton is richly endowed by nature, and it had until the eve of our time a canal which one novelist has described as a band of silver drawn across a valley of gold."

For a time Pinbury Park, Sapperton, which we mentioned last week, was used as a show-room by the famous craftsmen, Ernest Gimson and Ernest and Sidney Barnsley, but they later moved to separate houses around the village. Ernest Barnsley devoted his time to architecture. His brother Sidney produced furniture.

Gimson had a much wider field of interest. He not only supervised his cabinet makers and his blacksmiths, but he was also an architect of note, and interested in model plastering. Certainly the influence of Gimson and the Barnsleys on furniture design, and to a lesser extent architecture, has been considerable. It is to be regretted that not more of their followers are working locally.

KING CHARLES I

Depicted on the tomb of Sir Henry Poole, and his wife, in the Parish Church, are their children. It was these children who entertained King Charles I when he visited Sapperton in 1644. The King stayed at Sapperton on a Saturday night, and he would almost certainly have worshipped in the little Church on Sunday morning.

The Rector of Sapperton and Frampton for the past 24 years has been the Rev. Arthur N. Ruck, M.A.

In December last year elec-

tric lighting was installed in the Church. Most of the village gave generously towards the work, which was done very carefully so as not to destroy the quiet charm of the ancient building.

The village school was built by the Bathurst family, and is still owned by them, though it is run as a Church School in collaboration with the Gloucestershire Education Committee.

The Bathurst family have a long connection with Sapperton parish, and the present Lord Bathurst is Lord of the Manor, and owns most of the village.

Sapperton Village Hall, designed by Ernest Barnsley, was built in 1912 as a gift to the village by Lady Bathurst.

CHANGED THE NAME

When the Glebe Farm, Sapperton, was re-built at the end of the 19th century, the first tenants were a Mr. and Mrs. Gulleys ("I have changed the name for obvious reasons," writes Mr. Jewson, who tells the story in his book "By Chance I Did Rove"). The Gulleys, who had previously been in India, had come to the village prepared to be the village squire and Lady Bountiful. They considered themselves important people and expected to be welcomed by the county, while in the village they would be respectfully "kow-towed" to, boys touching their caps and girls curtsying. But the village was no India and they were treated with no more or less respect than other people.

Keeping a good collection of wine themselves, they considered the drinking of an occasional pint of beer by a villager to be a wasteful and disgusting habit. The Gulleys employed one old man and his son on the farm, and when harvesting started, these men applied for the customary allowances of a gallon of beer and cider every day.

This was against Mr. Gulleys'



A familiar sight in Frampton Mansell is "Joe", a horse with the daily task of carrying milk from Puck Mill Farm to the village. With "Joe" is Mr. H. A. Lane.

principles (for them), so he refused to give it to them for their harvest drink. However, he found on a shelf in an out-building a small barrel of home-made blackcurrant wine, left by mistake, perhaps by the previous tenant. Assuming this was a harmless teetotal beverage he gave it to the men for their harvest drink.

As it happened, this was some of "the right stuff," as the men said afterwards, it had probably been well laced with brandy and it had certainly had plenty of time to mature.

THIRSTY WORK

Everyone knows, of course, harvesting is thirsty work, so the men helped themselves freely from the little barrel, with the result that, toward evening, the old man fell off the wagon and broke his leg. There was no telephone in those days, so the son got out his bicycle to ride to Cirencester and fetch a doctor. But he found himself getting more and more sleepy and less and less able to control his bicycle. He managed to steer a zig-zag course for the first two miles, by which time he had completely forgotten the reason for his ride, and he lay down under a tree and promptly went to sleep.

When he awoke next morning he was perfectly sober but had no idea how he came to be two miles from home. So he rode back to his cottage, where he was unable to answer his wife's searching questions of where he had

ing and is said to stand on the site of an earlier mill that was in existence in the reign of Edward II.

South of Sapperton lies Cirencester Park, an enclosure of about 20 square miles. The Park was planned during the first half of the 18th century by Allen Lord Bathurst, who was assisted by his friend Alexander Pope, translator of Homer's Iliad.

FRAMPTON MANSELL

Frampton Mansell is probably named from Froom Town (the town on the River Froom) and Mansell, because for several centuries it was owned by the Mansell family.

Somewhere between Frampton and the Stroud-Cirencester road stood once a beacon, a tall pole on top of which was a basket of inflammable material. Such beacons stood on all prominent parts of the country, and they were lit in an emergency as a signal for all men to take up arms and be ready.

In 1759 a hoard of Roman coins was discovered at Lark's Bush in Frampton, when a cartwheel crushed the earthenware pot in which the coins were buried just beneath the surface. It is thought that a Roman soldier buried the coins, probably all his worldly wealth, before going into battle.

"THE CANDLE ROOM"

Eight tons of plaster and rubble were removed from the walls of the "Gin Trap" at the Crown Inn, to reveal the old wooden beams, which are

had no idea how he came to be two miles from home. So he rode back to his cottage, where he was unable to answer his wife's searching questions of where he had been all night! When the facts of the case came out, the general opinion was that it was disgraceful of the Gulleys to have given such drink to their men, all the more so because their views of drinking by working-class men were well known.

DANEWAY HOUSE

Near Sapperton is Daneway House, one time home of the Hancox family. The part of the house facing the village was built by the Hancoxs in the middle 17th century, while the back portion on the north side is said to date from the 15th century.

Mr. Thomas Hancox, who lived at Daneway from 1710-1797, had an interest in the opening of the Thames and Severn Canal in 1789, as it ran through a part of his land. He was present when it was inspected by George III and his consort in 1788, and he used to tell how walking along a slippery plank the Queen Consort slipped into the mud.

Incidentally in the name Daneway, the "Dane" comes from the Anglo Saxon "Dene" meaning valley, and not from any tradition of Scandinavian invaders of Gloucestershire.

NORTH AND SOUTH

Two miles north of Sapperton, high on the western side of the deep, narrow valley stands the village of Edgeworth. Near the manor house is the tiny church of St. Mary, Norman in its oldest parts. A little up the valley stands the topmost and probably the oldest mill on the Frome. Edgeworth Mill, now used as a farmhouse, is a Tudor build-

"THE CANDLE ROOM"

Eight tons of plaster and rubble were removed from the walls of the "Gin Trap," at the Crown Inn, to reveal the old wooden beams, which are such a feature of this room. This part of the Inn dates from about 1600 and at night when the candles are lit, the room lives up to its other names of "the candle room." A mantrap hanging on one of the walls is an interesting reminder of other days.

"The Crown Inn," Frampton Mansell, has a pre-1669 licence issued in the time of King Charles. It is a special type of licence, issued in those days, and it cannot be taken away except by the Queen's consent. The present licensees of the "Crown" are Mrs. Susan Cousins and her husband. She reports that, if anything, petrol rationing has brought an increase in trade to the inn. The "Crown" is a free house and stocks 47 different brands of bottled beer.

One of the outhouses at the inn is a single room ten feet square. It was in this room, at the end of the 19th century, that a family with five children were brought up.

The only other public house in Frampton is "The White Horse."

St. Luke's chapel of ease, Frampton Mansell, was built in 1843 by the Bathurst family. Although built in Cotswold Stone the chapel is in a slightly Italian style. It has recently been re-decorated but it is still lit by oil lamps.

There is also a Baptist Church in the village, and plans are afoot for the erection of a village hall. Some of the villagers walk the one and a half miles to Oakridge Village Hall for a game of whist.

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