

# "Our Village" Series

Concluding

S. N. & J.  
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## CAINSCROSS & EBLEY

- \* Victory Park Gun
- \* New and Unsettled Age
- \* Council House Estates

TODAY a large part of the sporting activities in Cainscross and Ebley is conducted in Victory Park, usefully situated between the two places. The Park was originally bought by public subscription after the First World War, as its name indicates. Before it was a field known as "Derry Hay," and an additional piece of land was given by Mr. F. H. Harper.

After the end of hostilities in 1918, the parish was offered a captured German gun as a war trophy for the part they had played in the National Savings scheme. Mr. J. B. Powell, present deputy clerk to Stroud R.D.C. and one-time clerk to Cainscross Parish Council, recalls that he had the job of going to Farnborough to choose the weapon which stood for many years on a concrete plinth near the main gate of the Park. It was a small calibre gun on a naval mounting which found its way into the melting pot during the scrap drive in the Second World War.

Nowadays Victory Park is used as the ground for Cainscross Rugby Football Club which celebrated its diamond jubilee in 1955. Two teams are operated.

First news of a Rugby team in the Cainscross and Ebley district came in the 1894-95 season when a match with Gloucester Gordon League was lost by a dropped goal and a try to a goal. By 1895-96 the Club seemed to have developed a connection with St. Matthew's Church and was in fact known as the "Cainscross St. Matthew's Rugby Football Team."

### NEW CHANGING QUARTERS

In the early days the changing quarters were in the basement of the school but now the Club are more fortunate, as are other clubs who use the Park, in having changing quarters and baths on the ground. Stroud U.D.C. made pro-

skilled craftsmen were without jobs. Fortunately the state of the engineering trade in the locality has been very much better since 1945.

It was from the Dudbridge Ironworks and the Apperley cloth mills at Dudbridge that the hooters sounded on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month of the year 1918 to announce the signing of the Armistice which ended World War I.

They were heard a short distance away by the scholars of Cainscross School, out in the playground for their morning break. They grew wild with excitement, threw their hats in the air and cheered as only schoolboys can.

Soon they were mustered in orderly throng to go to a service of thanksgiving in St. Matthew's church where the Rev. Wilkinson Storey, for so long vicar of Cainscross, officiated. Afterwards there was a half holiday during which it began to drizzle and the occasion is remembered by the writer as ending on a gloomy note.

The hooters which sounded the ending of the 1914-18 war also heralded a new and unsettled age and it was not long before the boys of Cainscross School were divided into two camps, one supporting Sir Ashton Lister, Coalition Liberal, and the other the first Labour candidate ever to contest the Division. He was Capt. C. W. Kendall, who did surprisingly well in the "Coupon Election" which sent Lloyd George and his Coalition Government back to power for another four years.

Sir Ashton Lister polled 12,734 votes and Capt. Kendall 8,533, and it was not until the 1929 election that the Labour poll again reached and passed this total.

ALTERED CONSIDERABLY

Rugby Football Team."

## NEW CHANGING QUARTERS

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In addition to the Rugby Club two cricket clubs use the Park — the Cainscross Youth XI and Ebley C.C. The latter, newly formed, has been experiencing mixed fortunes but with a little more interest shown by the general public could be quite successful.

The Victory Park Bowling Club is well-known throughout the local bowling circles and another of the local sporting clubs is the Ebley Lawn Tennis.

Thanks to the energy of the Urban District Council the area covered by Victory Park has been greatly extended. The valley which once separated the park from Ebley has been filled with rubble, levelled, covered with soil and seeded with grass. This will soon be in a condition to be rolled and cut.

## THE GREAT SLUMP

It is not the purpose of this article to enlarge on the close links of Cainscross and Ebley with the industry in the valley and along the old Stroudwater Canal bank. That would make a story of its own and in particular the closing down of the Dudbridge Ironworks shortly after the First World War.

The great industrial slump which followed the 1914-18 war was a disaster locally, although the storm was weathered with more success in the Stroud valleys than elsewhere. It seemed impossible that after the vast activity during the war years, when the foundry spouted flames by day and by night and the roar of aero engines on test never seemed to end, that the Dudbridge Ironworks should ever close. Nevertheless, the time came when they did close and many

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## ALTERED CONSIDERABLY

In the forty years which have followed Cainscross and Ebley have altered very considerably. They have lost most of their rural character and many of the old families who once had homes in the larger houses round about have either left or have died out.

Outwardly the most marked change has been the growth of the new Council housing estates, first of all in the twenties and then, immediately after the end of the Second World War, in a very large scale at Ebley and Cashes Green. Much private building has also taken place but the indications are that most of the available building space has been taken up. The new primary school at Cashes Green, so long clamoured for, opened on Monday, and the district may now be entering a more settled period.

One feature of the huge change in circumstances experienced by large numbers of people and the influx of new population, has been the way in which the Labour Party has assumed political leadership in Cainscross and Ebley. At this very moment the chairman of Stroud Urban District Council is Mr. Walter Preston, J.P., who leads the Labour group and whose home is one of the new Council houses at Ebley. A few years before him another Cainscross Ward councillor, and also a Council house tenant, Mr. E. W. Mason, occupied the chair, too.

Will the future find Cainscross and Ebley losing still more of their identity within the boundaries of urban Stroud or will they, under the review of district shortly to be carried out by the County Council, find themselves back inside the rural district but this time a much larger and more important authority taking in Nailsworth and the town of Stroud? It will not be long before we get an answer.