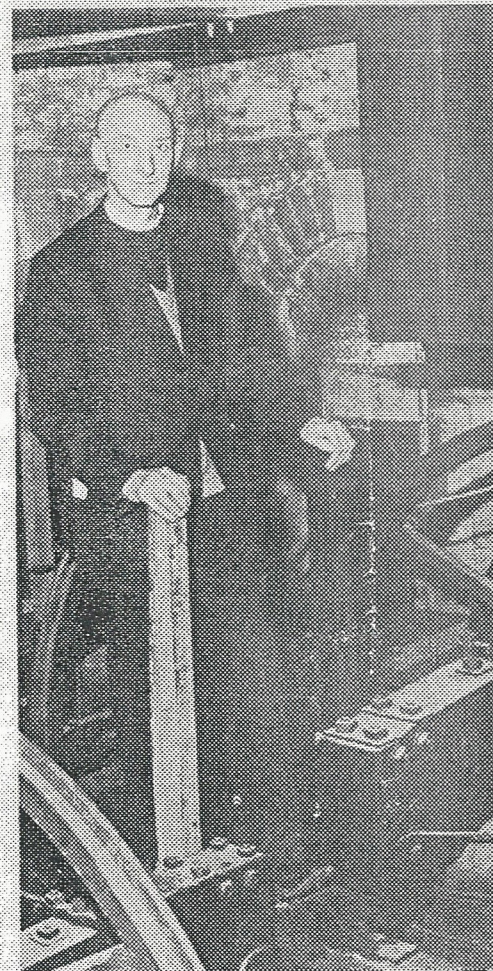


A village that it is a privilege to share



A panoramic shot of the junction of Church Street and High Street. Well-known landmarks from left to right include the George Inn, the Post Office, the War Memorial, the garage of Mr. Herbie Goddard.



When you live in a picturesque village, do you show it off to visitors and put up with the inconvenience that may result, or should you discourage the 'outsiders'? This is the question East Meon people asked themselves recently.

The answer, provided by the village's 'Mayor', Mr. Herbie Goddard, chairman of the parish council and Village Hall Committee, was that East Meon is a lovely village and it is the privilege of those living there to be able to share it with others.

the many bridges and watch the waters of the Meon which first gave life and name to the village more than 1,000 years ago.

If you stand in Church Street where the road crosses the stream, you

Looking at the village from the top, you can imagine that you are looking at a film set. An everyday story of country life with the setting, the heart of the village, little-changed in centuries.

There is too much so

It is no longer a farm. For years this has been 'Herbie' Goddard's garage. The old flint buildings are listed as being of interest and as such are protected against major alterations. Instead of bales of hay, petrol pumps stand outside.

and the site sold to pay for a new hall on which work has started.

Until it is finished, David Goddard will continue to make his front room, where the old shop counter once stood, available for small meetings.

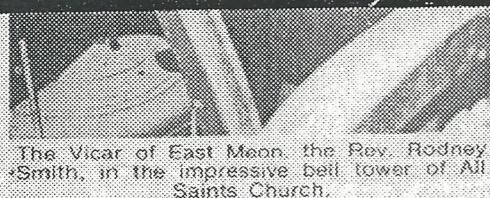
There are many interesting corners of the village, and the stream is the dominant feature throughout, although one is always aware of the church with its grey spire which can be seen for miles.

Apart from the interesting buildings, there are



Story — Glynna Williams
Pictures — Donald Eades





The Vicar of East Meon, the Rev. Rodney Smith, in the impressive bell tower of All Saints Church.

couple of weeks ago, and his opinion was shared by the majority of the audience. There is no doubt about it, East Meon is a friendly village.

One can stroll along the High Street beside the stream or stand on one of

church of All Saints sitting on a rise at the foot of Park Hill.

The hill with the church provides a back-cloth to the village. A path starting by the church takes one to the top and on a clear day one can see for miles

and talked to some of the people you might find yourself visualizing the scene 50 or 60 years ago.

You might see Glenthorne Farm, opposite the old cobbler's shop in the High Street, with its cowshed, stables, dairy, and apple store. In the yard is the hay, a water trough — the kind of thing that one expects to find in a farmyard.

This is in the centre of the village. Next door is the village shop, with groceries in one half and bicycles in the other. The farm and the shop are owned by the Coles family.



The shop is the general store. Two oak-clad iron pillars are in the middle of the room supporting a wooden beam 25ft. long. The reason for these massive supports is that the upstairs room is a corn store which will hold 60 tons of grain.

In 1974 many of the old walls and buildings remain and the village has retained its rural charm, but there have been changes. One is not likely to see a herd of cows wander down the High Street, but the farm buildings still remain.

been ousted from the stables by its perhaps more troublesome successor, the motor car.



In the yard is a 1932 Bedford breakdown truck which was only withdrawn from service three years ago and is now being renovated.

Mr. Goddard (senior) has officially given up running the garage, although he still deals with the paper work and mans the pumps when he is not driving the school bus or one of the village's taxis.

His son, David Goddard, a partner with his father has taken over most of the everyday work of running the garage business.

David lives in the old shop next door. Now a private house called "Gaitthouse," the name refers not to the large old gate posts which stand at the entrance to the old farmyard next door, but to its one time owner, author Cyril Coles, who wrote under the pen name of Francis Gaithe.

Even now that the shop no longer exists, the building is still very much a centre of the village. Last year the village hall was closed

Files. Born in Somerset, he went to America at an early age before coming to East Meon, where his uncle, Bill Luff, was landlord of The George.

Mr. Files first worked in the village as a shepherd boy, earning 7s. 6d. (37½p) a week for minding sheep on the nearby hills.

He now lives in a small flint cottage. On the wall outside are boxes of flowers — and Mr. Files himself on sunny Sunday afternoons.

He will tell the interested visitor how the cottage, Flint Cottage came into his family's possession.

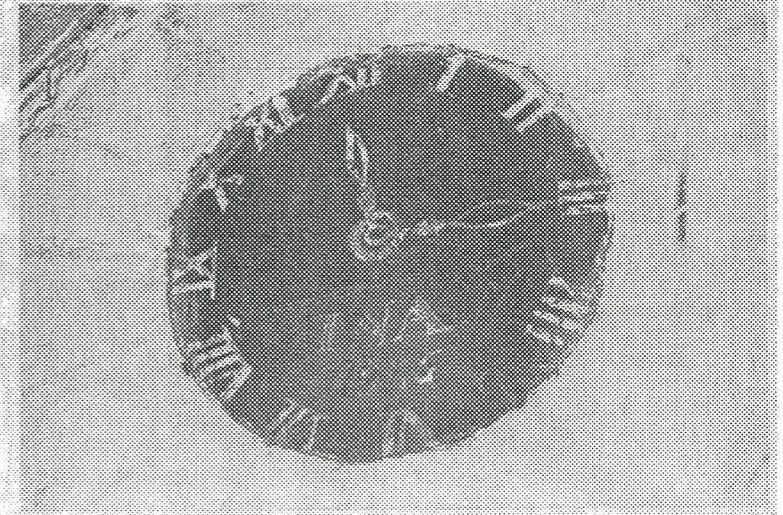


Running out of money, he sold the cottage to Mr. Luff, the landlord, for £150 — a sum which was paid in pints of beer.

There are many such tales, and many interesting people in the village — too many to name individually — and it is the people that give East Meon much of its charm.



All part of the rural scene in springtime — shepherd Mr. John Read with two of the new season's lambs.

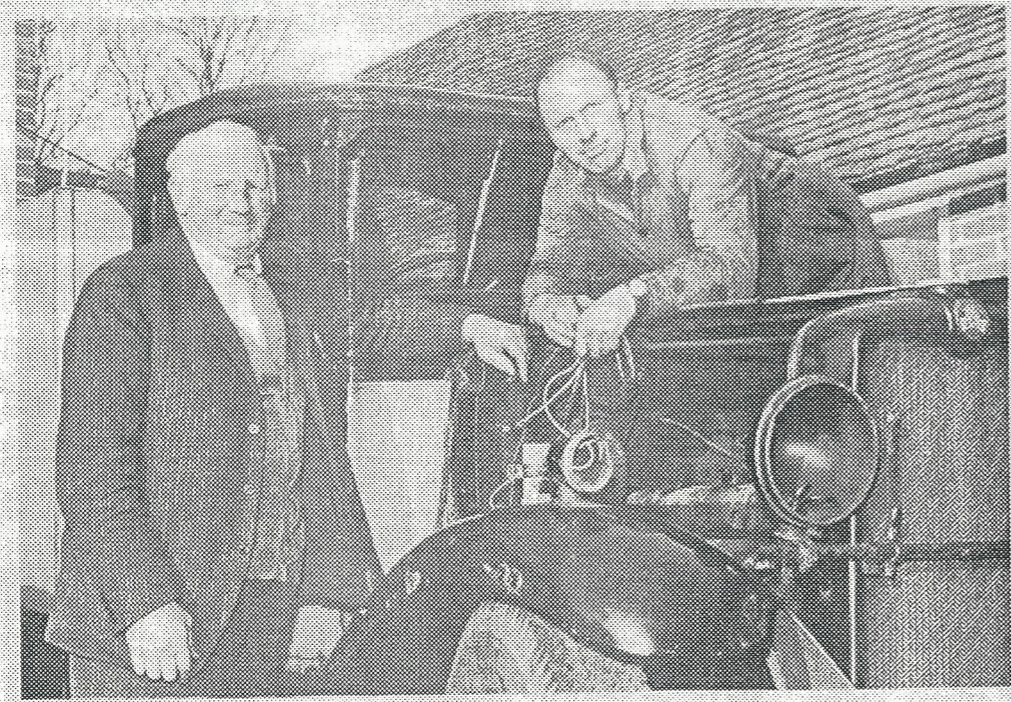


Something one has to look for — this "clock" is painted on slate set near the roof at the end of the old dairy sheds at Glenthorne Farm — now the garage. Believed to be an "insurance clock" it bears the date 1875 and the initials L.N.A.

Below — East Meon's famous All Saints Church attracts visitors from all over the country, and it would not look the same in Spring without the glorious blooms of the daffodils, admired here by some of the women from the village.



Brook Cottages — these aptly-named thatched cottages stand on the edge of the stream at the eastern end of the High Street.



The "Mayor" of East Meon — Mr. Herbie Goddard (left), Chairman of the parish council and Village Hall Committee, and owner of the garage, seen here with his son, David, and the 1932 breakdown truck.

