

# VILLAGE PORTRAIT

## GOADBY MARWOOD <sup>1/2</sup>

Quentin Clark writes another in our series of village portraits

AS a schoolboy, Geoffrey Pizer thought that he'd like to become a blacksmith. But unlike so many schoolboy thoughts, it didn't vanish, and now he runs his own business.

There was no blacksmith, in his home village of Goadby Marwood, so Geoffrey contacted Malcolm Kellam at Waltham and started doing Saturday morning work. He also went there during holidays, then when he left Melton Upper School he started his apprenticeship.

For more than a year now he has been running his own business in Goadby, a village which never previously had a blacksmith.

He doesn't do a lot of work for the village but is kept busy, travelling into Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire to shoe racehorses, hunters and children's ponies.

"He'll go anywhere," said his father Mr Edward Pizer. "From 8 am to 9 am he makes shoes then he is off on the road."

Geoffrey is part of an old village family. His father worked on local farms for over 40 years and for about 10 years has been gardener at Goadby Hall, the home of reclusive racehorse owner Monica Sherriff.

There is no shop in Goadby Marwood, but the village has a post office.

"My mother ran it for 50 years," said Mr Pizer, "and my wife Peggy, who helped her, has run the post office for about three years."

The Pizers and some other families have been in the village for years, but changing times have brought a new pattern to the life of Goadby, which was once an ironstone and farming place.

"I've lived all my life in the village," said oldest resident, 88-year-old Miss Flo Kemp. "I used to know everybody in the village, but it has all changed now. There were big families in the old days, and more people living here."

Miss Kemp has lived in her home at The Brooks, Narrow Lane, for over 60 years. Before that she lived in Back Lane where her family farmed.

In the old days there were

many villagers who lived to a ripe old age, and there are still people in Goadby who remember when farmer James Mayfield celebrated his 100th birthday.

That was 25 years ago and there was something of a village celebration which included the ringing of the bells of St Denys Church.

There's no pub in Goadby Marwood, which has a population of around 100, and the way in is mainly the way out, though there is a gated road to Wycomb.

Despite this, people find their way to the village and property is in demand. Now many people live in Goadby and work elsewhere.

Among them is Tony Kitson and his wife Denise, who live at Field Cottage, where they moved to 18 months ago.

Between them they have built up a flourishing whole-food business in Melton and Loughborough. After working as a research chemist, Tony saw an opening for whole-foods and started with a stall he and his father Ted, of Wymondham, built in The Arcade, Melton.

Business grew, with Denise, then a speech therapist, working part time. Now they also have a shop in Loughborough and Denise works full time in the business.

"We go for natural foods and herbs and have seen a rapid increase in demand," said Tony.

Another villager who has his business elsewhere is Ray Cook who took over The Rectory in 1978.

Ray, a Stathern-based architect, liked the look of the stone building which had been empty for about 18 months. Since then he has done a lot of work inside and cleaned up the outside of the building.

Sharing in this restoration has been Ray's wife Barbara Wendy, who recently helped out by running the village post office while Mrs Pizer was in Nottingham City Hospital for treatment.

Enjoying organisations such as the WI, scouts and guides means a trip of almost two miles up the road to Waltham and there's not really a lot for the young people of the village to do.

This was in the mind of Mr

Dennis Gatehouse, who is with Pera, and lives at Sun Dial House in Goadby's Main Street.

He contacted youngsters and adults and got going a social club which meets weekly during the winter in the village hall, which was once the local school.

There's a log fire going for the Thursday evening sessions when darts, dominoes, chess and cards are played. A table tennis table was made and there is also a snooker table. It has also been known for people to end the evening making toast at the fire.

"Both the people who have been in the village for many years and newcomers have responded well," said Mr Gatehouse. "We are working out plans for the next session and have a set of table skittles which we are repair-

ing."

There are a number of dates around Mr Gatehouse's home, one going back to the 1700's. The house and outbuildings were once owned by the village sawyer and he appears to have dated woodwork done.

"The story goes that the sawyer made his own coffin and placed it up in the rafters of his workshop so that it was ready for when he died," said Mr Gatehouse. "I've never been able to tell whether that was fact or just part of folklore."

Goadby Marwood, which was a Danish settlement, had earlier been a Roman one.

Evidence of iron workings of around 280 AD were discovered when the site was excavated in 1953.



● Gardener at Goadby Marwood Hall is Mr Edward Pizer whose wife Peggy runs the post office and whose son is the blacksmith.



● Goadby Marwood Post Office.



● Tony Kitson at work on his whole-food stall in Melton.

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