

Commuters transform this once busy hamlet



Ian Hassell, landlord of the Gate Inn, with his 19-year-old daughter, Ilona. Mr. Hassell, a widower, has run the pub for 20 years. He likes the friendship of the locals in winter and meeting new people when they visit the pub in summer. Ilona is just starting a job as an auxiliary nurse at Roundhills Maternity Home in Kirby Muxloe.

THERE is not much left of the tiny village of Carlton near Market Bosworth. The once buzzing little hamlet has been transformed by the countless new homes which have been built there. And with this changing identity many people feel that the village's sense of community has been lost.

Villagers still yearn for the old days when Carlton was like one tiny, self-sufficient, society. Sadly the days when a blacksmith visited Carlton twice a week have long since passed, and the village school, which was built in the 19th Century, was closed in the 1960s, the church, which was built around the same time, is still the villagers' place of worship.



The picturesque parish church of St. Andrew's at Carlton. The 19th century church is one of the few centres of village life left since Carlton's school closed in the 1960s.

The decline of Carlton's sense of community are blamed on the modern houses which have taken over in the last few years.

It is only in the last 20 years that the modern houses have been built.

The problem, as Mr. Alan Hassell sees it, is the commuter. "People commute every morning but we don't see them in the evenings either," said Mr. Hassell, who runs the Gate Inn pub in the village.

"Since these new houses have been built, there is no longer the village life there used to be. Half the village commutes to Leicester and you just don't see them, he said.

"I have run this pub for more than five years now and there are still people here who I don't know."

Mr. Hassell says he has tried many times to foster some kind of community spirit in Carlton but as yet feels he has achieved little lasting success. "I have organised various 'dos' to try and get people together," he said. "I am just hoping I can do something to bring the village back together."

Farmer Bob Edmunds lives in the village's old Manor House which dates back to the 17th Century.

Mr. Edmunds, a spritely 58-year-old, and his son Robert (25) farm just 46 acres at Manor House farm.

A dairy herd and countless poultry keep the two very busy but Mr. Edmunds always has time to chat about the old Manor House.

"I have lived in the house since my parents moved here in about 1946," he said. "And it is a fine place to live."

Mr. Edmunds took over the Manor House and farm after his father and mother died.

The original 17th Century stone Manor House still stands but it has been added to over the years so that most of what is visible from Main Street is more recent red brick.

The more interesting features of the house are to be found inside.

A tiny shelf set into the living room wall is thought to be what is left of a window through which the villagers used to pay their taxes to the Lord of the Manor.

The staircase hall is also a part of the house worth seeing. A door leads to the stairway and the tiny hall behind it is thought to be cut out of one piece of solid rock.

Mr. Edmunds says the house is very interesting and regrets that he doesn't know more about it. He feels that since the village has grown with the building of so many new houses, it has changed drastically.



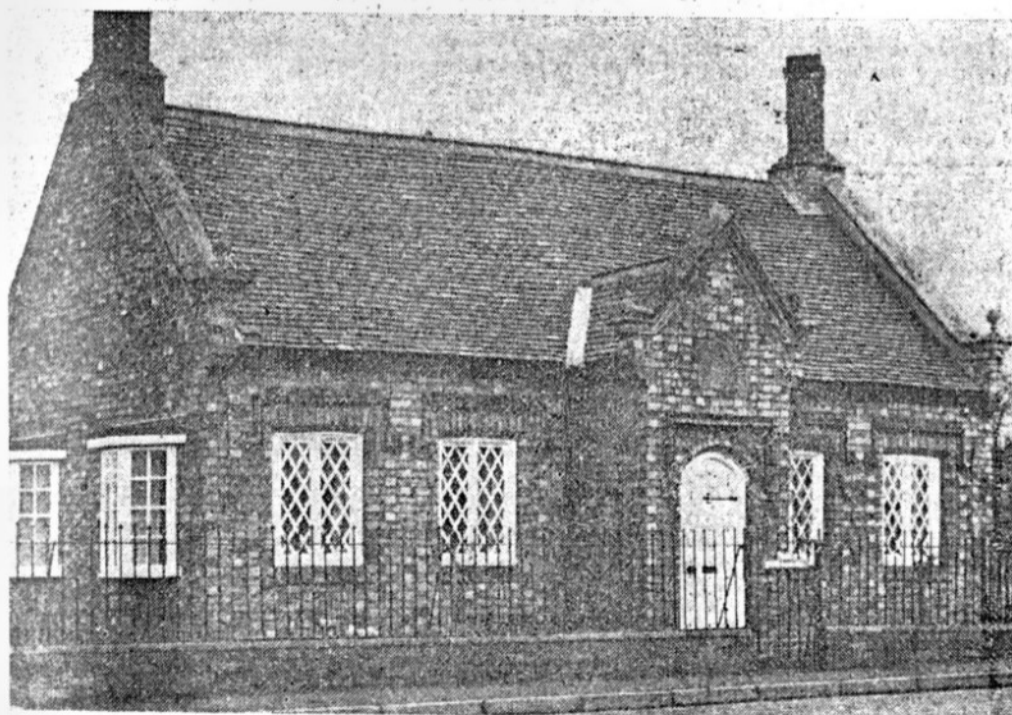
Mr. Jack Oldacres, remembers when there were just 30 houses in the village. Much of his working life was spent in Nailstone Colliery from where he retired early after an accident. But for 20 years he worked 12-hour days, seven-days-a-week on the farm. He has been married 45 years.

"It is still a very nice village though," he says. "And I am glad to live here".

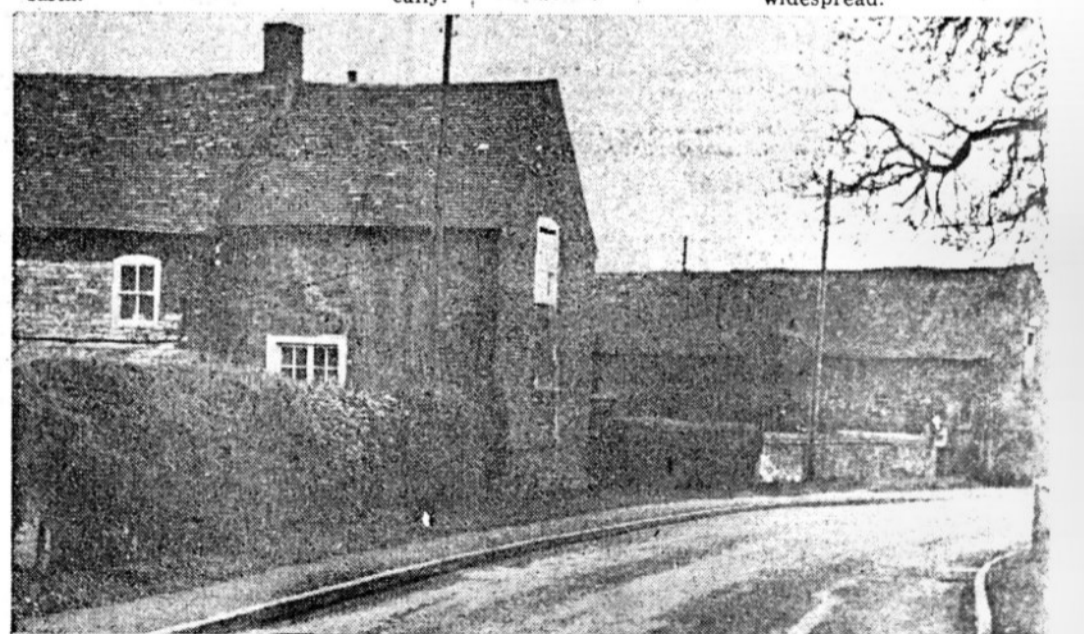
The sentiments expressed by Mr. Edmunds about the village are very similar to those of many villagers. There is a concern that Carlton might lose all its sense of community seems to be fairly widespread.



Local farmer Mr. Bob Edmunds (right) and his son, Robert. Together they farm 46 acres at Manor House Farm. They keep a dairy herd and a selection of poultry.



Carlton's old village school. Built in 1847, it finally closed its doors to pupils for the last time in the 1960s. Now it has been converted into a cottage and is the home of Carlton Parish Council Clerk, Mr. N. Parish and his wife.



Carlton village as it used to be. On the left is the old Manor House and the original stone can be seen left of the window. The part of the building facing the road is an extension of the original.

1st page 7 1978
3

LETTERS

Plenty of community spirit in Carlton

Sirs — I was surprised to read in your article, Carlton In Focus, about the lack of community spirit.

I lived in one of the modern houses at Carlton for approximately six years, and found a wealth of friendliness and community spirit that I had not encountered before.

Perhaps you did not interview the villagers who spent much of the time organising coffee evenings, village fetes, etc, and farmers like the Colemans, who generously opened their farm up for charity fetes each year. I feel you would have found a vastly different impression.

Jubilee celebrations were as good as any for such a tiny village. My family found great warmth and friendliness whilst living there.

I feel your article to be unfair to the people of Carlton, and can only point out that often people who complain of lack of community spirit are often the people who fail to support the "goings on" of their village.

—GARY DAVILLE