



The local

"There is nothing which has yet been contrived by man by which so much happiness is produced as by a good tavern or inn"

SAMUEL JOHNSON

The Rising Sun —High Wych

BREWERS: *Courage (Eastern), Ltd.*

"WHY is High Wych never completely in the dark?" The answer to this riddle, which used to be posed to all new residents, is: "Because the village has both the Half Moon and the Rising Sun."

This consideration is, however, unlikely to influence the villagers when, at the end of the month, they meet to decide whether or not to recommend the introduction of street lighting.

Both the inns, apparently, date from the beginning of the 18th Century and both had, at one time, shops attached. The Rising Sun, up to 1919, was also directly connected with the village bakery, which continued to operate under separate management until five years ago.

Fred White took over the inn from the Misses Tyser, who were the last to manage both inn and bakery. He was succeeded by William Oakley, whose daughter Iris is the present licensee. Her husband Sidney, until recently, managed to combine his arduous duties in the pub with the equally strenuous activities of coal merchant.

There is no doubt that the Rising Sun is a real local and the public bar boasts no trimmings apart from the football poultice results. In summer, however, the migration of the regulars on holiday is marked by the collection of pseudo-erotics so popular in the seafront

kiosks of English resorts. Good conversation there is in plenty and the visiting townsman would probably be amazed to hear the haunts and habits of the local fur and feather discussed with such expert knowledge and from first-hand experience. By no means are all the accents in the soft Hertfordshire brogue. Charlie Lampey brings with him the remarkable experience of 23 years on tugboats and knows well the lower reaches of the Thames where he has absorbed much of the fascination and mystery of the lesser known coves and inlets in those waters. He still has that fresh complexion, twinkling eye and nautical bearing that sailors, from all the world, seem to inherit.

Paddy Joyce, as delightful and soft spoken a character as one could ever hope to meet from the "Ould Country," can spin a yarn with that smooth confidence so endearing to all Irishmen.

His description of the Irish guarding American ammunition in the wilds of Scotland during the darkest days of the



● Mrs. Iris Puncher (right), licensee of the Rising Sun, with her daughter Celia and one of the pub's regular customers, Mr. Ted David.

war should make every Englishman wonder what they have ever done to merit such worthy allies.

Often in the Rising Sun is "Buke," one of a long line of Mascalls who have lived in this part of Hertfordshire for generations, and who, although difficult to describe, brings with him more than a breath of the countryside. Apart from a short spell during the 1914-18 War and his trips to London on the old hay wagons, Mr. Mascall has spent all his 70 odd years in the same cottage in the village.

The origin of his nickname is reputed to date from his early years in the village school. Reading from the Bible which, at the beginning of the century, was one of the chief forms of instruction in the church schools, Mascall solemnly intoned from the Book of Isaiah: "One thousand shall flee at the rebuke of one."

"No: rebuck," said the schoolmaster — "rebuke . . . **BUKE, BUK, BUK.**" And "Buke" he has been from that day to this.

1965 was a vintage year for High Wych, for the village again won the best kept village competition. On that occasion they were the first winners of the new trophy for the "Best Kept Small Village in Hertfordshire." The trophy now stands by the village green and is proudly floodlit each night. The visit of the Lord Lieutenant of the County to unveil the trophy last July was a proud day for the village and,

on the green, a barrel of beer from the Rising Sun was suitably broached in order to celebrate the occasion.

John Milton, in the 17th Century, knew the pleasures of the countryside when he wrote:

As one who long in populous city pent,

Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,

Forth issuing on a Summer's morn to breathe

Among the pleasant villages and farms

Adjoin'd, from each thing met conceives delight.

NEXT WEEK: The Queen's Head, Churchgate-street, Old Harlow.

*With complim
John L*

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