

# At Nearly 90 He Works All Day At His Forge

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SOON after nine o'clock every morning, 89 year old blacksmith, Mr. Edmund Hussey opens his forge in Sopers Lane, Christchurch, rolls up his sleeves and starts work.

For although he is 90 in a few weeks' time, Mr. Hussey works more than nine hours a day, six days a week. And all his profits go to charity.

"Being a blacksmith is a most satisfying life," explained Mr. Hussey this week, "and it works out very well. I enjoy myself and at the same time help others less fortunate than myself." Mr. Hussey has been a blacksmith for only fifteen years.

Yes, playing around with metals and a

forge was only his hobby until one day he heard a lecture on the leprosy problem by the Rev. Tubby Clayton, founder of Toc H.

"I was very interested in this work," he commented, "and as there was a colony not far from my former home in Buckinghamshire, I determined to do what I could to help them." It was a shocking disease, he said, although fortunately not very prevalent in England.

Now Mr. Hussey is a member of the executive committee of the Home of St. Giles, a well-equipped colony in Essex. However, he still recalls how he first began helping lepers. "My first job was to collect £50 in public subscriptions," he said, "but I didn't like the thought of asking people for money, so I sold some of my work instead." That raised £5 more than was needed.

Although he has been in Christchurch for less than a month — he is living at "Ennis," Clarendon Road — Mr. Hussey's tall upright figure and kindly smile are already well known. In the little shed he rents along Sopers Lane, visitors are always popping in to pass the time of day and admire some of his handiwork. Being a blacksmith is a tough job as well as a skilled one. It means standing up all day, which is a bit hard for a man of almost 90. As Mr. Hussey fingered some of his work and experimentally twisted a rod of iron in the vice, he told me how he began work as a boy of 15. He has been in the machine tool business most of his life, ending up as a manager. A widower for the past twenty years, he has lived for some time in Fordingbridge.

Inside his shed are some excellent examples of his work, including two neat garden tables with artistically designed wrought iron legs. Half-finished was a picturesque hanging lamp bracket and a paper rack.

"I've made hundreds of articles during the past ten years; he went on, "including 146 music stands, 31 candlesticks, 33 table lamps, as well as bookends and hearth sets." In addition he has made a couple of easels for children suffering from infantile paralysis.

"I do work for other charities, of course," he said, and mentioned the British Red Cross and Empire Cancer Campaign.

Asked how much he contributed a year towards charities, Mr. Hussey smiled and declined to answer, but he gives away all that he can earn at the age of 90.