

DEAD-END THREAT TO TOWN'S MOTHER VILLAGE

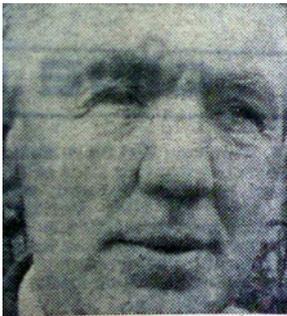
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Holdenhurst, which has existed far longer than Bournemouth itself, is often known as "The Mother of Bournemouth," but now the people of the village are concerned for the future.

While Bournemouth spreads its boundaries Holdenhurst is threatened with becoming a "dead end", and instead of progressing becoming a forgotten village.

The reason is the building of the new Bournemouth spur road, which cuts off a through route from the village. Now anyone going to Holdenhurst must go out the same way they came in— along a road barely wide enough for two cars to pass.

Domesday barn



Mr. E. J. Webb

I found Mr. E. J. Webb at home in his 300 - year - old home, Wheelwright Cottage, probably one of the most picturesque houses in the village. Attached to the cottage is an ancient barn which was mentioned in the Domesday Book.

Looking at the quaint whitewashed building with its front garden filled with daffodils, it was easy to imagine it was hundreds of years ago—and yet now the busy new road will soon be carrying hundreds of cars past within a few yards of the front door.

Mr. Webb told me that the closure of the road leading out of the village had made Holdenhurst a dead-end, and had "virtually wiped it of the map".

He also expressed concern about the access to the village for emergency services. A fire engine or ambulance rushing along could easily meet with an accident.

The road had been blocked in in the past by a fallen tree or by flooding and if this happened the village would be cut off altogether.

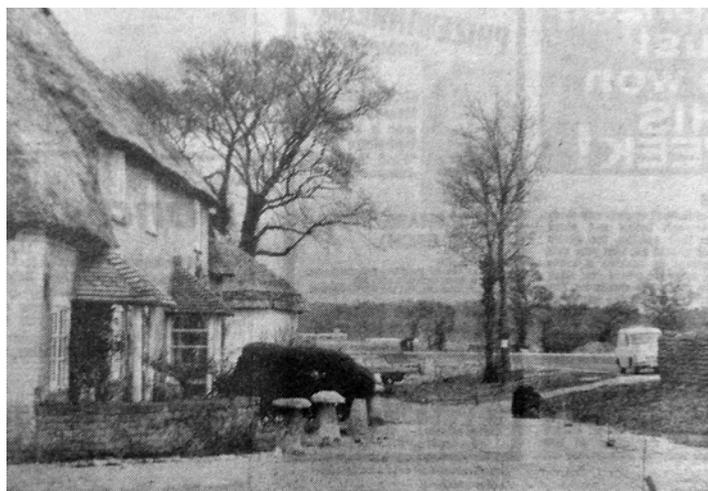
Home isolated

The home for retired nurses at Riverside - avenue had been "almost isolated" by the new road, the matron, Mrs. M. Thornton, told me.

She said that the average age of the nurses was in the 80's and now it was practically impossible for them to go to church in Holdenhurst. They had been in the habit of going through Riverside-avenue to church and for walks but now they would be unable to cross the busy road.

Staff had also encountered difficulties because a number of them came from the estate near Castle-lane and used to come through Holdenhurst on their way to work. Now they had to come the long way round—up Riverside-avenue.

Mrs. M. Marlow, the postmistress at Holdenhurst's ivy-clad Sub-Post Office, has lived in the village for more than 18 years.



Ancient cottages beside the new spur road.

When I went into the tiny post office to speak to Mrs. Marlow things were quiet and she had time to tell me how the new road was affecting trade.

Mrs. Marlow told me that before the road was built she often got custom from visitors passing through, or sight-seeing.

"But I am not simply concerned with the lack of customers; as a Londoner I like to see people about the place, and Holdenhurst is becoming too quiet," Mrs. Marlow said.

Hers is the only shop in the village, and for anything more than cigarettes, confectionary and small essentials the residents of Holdenhurst have to go elsewhere.

No footpath

A regular bus service runs approximately every hour from Holdenhurst. It turns round in the centre of the village. But in the past villagers have walked through along the Holdenhurst road with their shopping baskets. Now, housewives say there is no footpath alongside the new road and in wet weather it is almost impossible to walk along laden with shopping.

Mr. E. Lear, the manager of the Throop Fisheries, who lives in a house in the village, said that in some ways the new road had proved a boon—not so many coach loads of visitors now passed through the village on a round sight-seeing trip.

"Visitors sometimes used to drive through the village at all hours of the day and night— sometimes in the early hours of the morning. Now that there is no route through the village, not so many of them come, so to some extent the new road is a blessing," he told me.

But even he was not entirely happy about it. Anglers coming to fish at the Throop Fisheries, which is one of the largest in Europe, used to call at Mr. Lear's house to collect their fishing licences and then continue through the village to the river. Now large coaches carrying parties of anglers come into Holdenhurst from the Throop direction and have to turn round in the narrow road outside Mr. Lear's home.

Gone astray

"Sometimes anglers have got completely lost now that they can't come into the village by the Castle-lane roundabout — and I have had to go out and bring them back from as far afield as Poole when they have gone astray."

Mr. Robert M. Seare, who farms at Holdenhurst Farm, has lived in the village all his life and told me that the new road now cut his farm in half.

Some of his land was on one side of the road and some on the other. This presented quite serious difficulties as far as the cattle were concerned. There was no crossing for the cows across the new road as it was a clearway, and arrangement would now have to be made to milk the cows on the other side of the road instead of bringing them to the farm.

