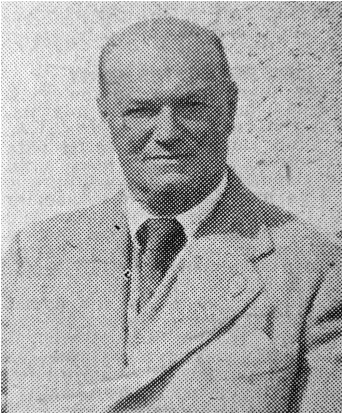


Mr. Francis Ferrey

"Christchurch Times" Reporter 1948



WAY back in the sixteenth century a wealthy Huguenot family were forced to leave France. Religious persecution was becoming too much for them. They came to England, to Twynham in fact.

Their name was Ferrey and they became one of the leading families in the town. Now there is only one of them left—Francis Ferrey.

He can tell many interesting stories of old Christchurch. "I went away," he says, "but the lure of the town has brought me back to finish my life here."

Most of the older people will remember Ferrey's shop in the High Street. Francis learnt his trade there after coming home from Salisbury Cathedral School.

He served in the first world war with his two brothers, one of whom was gassed and the other killed. Francis himself lost a leg and gained the M.M.

When he was well enough to start working it was to a new trade that he turned. It is a unique one: "I am an antique mechanic," he says.

That means all sorts of things and years of experience. One day he might be making up a suit of armour and the next examining the delicate parts of a 300-years-old music box. He has mended crossbows, flintlocks, clocks, music boxes by the hundred. "I love antiques," he smiles.

Mr. Ferrey's favourite relaxation is to play the Dulcitone. He doesn't know any music, but he composes pieces for this instrument.

We spoke about the Regatta. "It was grand to see it again," he said

"I expect things are very different to the old days." I said.

"Yes," smiles Mr. Ferrey, "the face of the town has altered a lot but underneath it's still Christchurch.

How right he is.