

## What Happened Was -21

First things first, several people have pointed out to me that the five hundred weight thames van shown in the last issue of SCN, was not the one we had, me for work and Janet for shopping. The one I had was a thames 15 cwt drop-sided pickup and after nearly 200,000 miles looked sad and unloved at the end of its days waiting for breaking or restoring.



Being involved with the village hall I had the dubious privilege of looking after the door most Friday nights when there was either a dance or disco on. Farmer Leonard Habberfield (Ivor and Davids father) once said about me, *'he's a big bloke and I wouldn't like to upset him'*. We also used to get a visit from the fire officer to check out the fire regulations, with John Edwards as secretary they were bound to be right anyway. The police also dropped by in the form of Merv Bradner or sergeant Pat Linthorne.



Pat said to me one night, can you call in at the station sometime, we have a job you might be able to help us with? It turned out Pat was in charge of the social club and he wanted security bars fitted to the bar in the clubroom, as he put it *'you just can't trust these coppers'*. That led to quite a lot of work and there was often a police car calling in even from Minehead, at times I wondered what the neighbours thought was going on. I even made a large pair of gates for Kenneth Steele the Chief Constables big house at West Monkton.

I did some work for Metford Jeanes at Stowey Court. When they increased the cheese making side of the farm business, a pig unit was included to make use of the whey from the dairy, so this involved a lot of pen fronts and gates plus a handling system for the pigs, this seemed to me to make sense. But Oh dear no! The buying team from Sainsburys (at that time they were Cricketers main customer) came on one of their spot checks and said that "their" cheese could not be made within a certain distance from the pigs, so out came the tape measure and the pigs were five yards too close. The outcome was Sainsburys stayed and the pig unit went and the whey was transported all over the countryside by tankers.



With Andrew being at school Janet was on the PTA and it was decided to raise the money for a swimming pool on the site to save the weekly bus trips. Janet said she would do cream teas the next weekend, so she got stuck in with Patsy Chedgy, Aunt Bess and Shirley Gunningham. Come Saturday morning there was a great heap of scones and a lot of homemade jam and in the morning I went to Stowey to collect the cream and some small tables and chairs from our village hall and all was set up on our front grass with a big sign on the verge. Then the thing you can't rely on, the weather, or perhaps you can. It started to rain and forgot to stop, all Saturday and most of Sunday as well but never mind, we tried. On Monday morning Farmer Jack Waterman from Sunnyhill Farm called in and said to Janet, *'sorry I missed my tea'*, I didn't think about it till late last night, *'but take this'* and he gave her a nice crisp new Ten-shilling note.

SLB