

VILLAGE STORES 1956-1969



ESTER RIDOUT

I am delighted to be asked to write a column for the Damerham Domesday Book. For 'twas in 1927, my parents (Mr and Mrs Gray), my two sisters and I arrived at Hyde Farm.

I well remember to this day looking across the field and wondering where the Farm House was. But after arriving we spent so many Happy Years there. My two sisters, Joan, Audrey and I spent most of the time at Damerham School under the Leadership of Miss Baines and Miss Tiller. They were Wonderful Years as I look back, but at the time perhaps we thought different. The same year Ron Ridout and his parents and with his brother, Ken came to live at Stapleton Farm. We went to school and Sunday School together and soon became firm friends. In 1944, we married and in time went to Pewsey to learn the Grocery Trade. While there, Brenda, our first daughter was born. In 1948 we moved back to Hyde Farm, where my Parents built Hyde View for us and we lived there having



Margaret, Ruth and John.

In 1956 the General Stores at East End came up for sale and we bought it. We spent 12 wonderful years there. Ron had a shop in The Van and travelled all the Villages around. We were so lucky to have Mr and Mrs Nicklen



with us as we were so busy.

The children all grew up and went to Damerham School until 11 and then bussed to Fordingbridge. Looking back we spent 40 such happy years in Damerham and whenever I come back and drive through, the memories flow back.

My grateful thanks to all the folk of Damerham at that time, for friendship, love and understanding to Ron and I.