Memories and Recollections

Memories of Mark Partridge of his father, Douglas Archie Partridge, who was a blacksmith in Newbold Verdon during the 1970s and 1980s.



We lived on Dragon Lane almost opposite what is now the doctors' surgery, but it was the Dragon pub then. We had moved to Newbold in about 1968 and we had a large garage at the back of the house which dad converted the inside into a forge.

Dad fought in the Korean War and when he came out, he worked in a quarry for a start and then he took an apprenticeship to become a farrier, and it took about five or six years for him to qualify.

When I was a boy, I would go with him in his little Morris Minor van when he was travelling out to shoe a horse. He was well known all over Leicestershire and in high demand; everyone in the horse world knew him. His main work was in shoeing horses. He made his own horseshoes using the anvil, after heating them up in the forge in the garage that he made himself.

He shoed the horses of the Dixie family in Market Bosworth who lived in the big house on the park. It was Sir Wolston Dixie's family and my dad shoed his daughter, Caroline's, horse.

Eventually, the work got too much for him. It was hard work shoeing a horse, especially if he was a bit feisty. He used to get kicked. He would hold the legs up between his knees and it was heavy going doing that and putting on the shoe.

He did this job for long time but when he couldn't do it any longer, he went and worked on the roads.