

NICHOLAS 'PADDY' DARMODY
88 High Street, Chinnor



Alas Chinnor entered into 1985 without one of its most popular and well-loved inhabitants, Nicholas 'Paddy' Darmody who died on December 22nd. 1984.

Nicholas, known to everyone as Paddy, sailed to England from his beloved Ireland in 1927 in search of work. For a while he found employment on the railways and whilst working at Hitchin in Hertfordshire he was introduced via a friend to his future wife Dorothy who at that time was working at the Vicarage, Great Milton. Rendezvousing in Thame meant a long and tiring cycle ride but, nevertheless, love flourished and the couple were married at Thame Catholic Church in October 1935.

After setting up home in one of the old cottages in Duck Square, Chinnor, it was not long before Paddy was seeking an increase in salary and better prospects. To this end he applied to Paddington Station for a position but on hearing that he would actually have to take a cut of about 6d decided to quit altogether and start work at the Cement Works. The hours were long, the work back-breaking, shovelling coal from the wagons by hand but not being one who was afraid of hard work Paddy would frequently return home of an evening, have his tea, and then go out to help one of the local farmers with his hay-making.

Chinnor was his home, so much so that during the remainder of his life he was never really happy away from it. "Chinnor is the finest place on God's earth" he would say "It's my perch, I am happy here" and he was. He loved the surrounding countryside, the animals, the wildlife, the people. Contentment is hard to define, for some even harder to achieve but Paddy managed admirably. He was interested in people, inquisitive almost to a fault, his enquiring mind would never rest. "If you want to know anything ask" was his repeated advice to his daughters.

An avid reader Paddy always kept abreast with world affairs, political views and current events. He was by no means a serious person though for he loved a practical joke or a tall story and many a person fell prey to his antics. During the 1940's Chinnor possessed a Male Voice Choir of which Paddy was a member. He loved to sing both for his own pleasure and for those who listened, his spontaneous performances could often be heard around the village particularly outside Mumfords.

Paddy Darmody was 'one in a million'. He loved Chinnor as it in its turn loved him. He will be sadly missed.

THE FORGOTTEN POST-BOX

Apparently it has been reported that the Chinnor Hill post-box positioned just at the junction with the Ridgeway Path is very seldom used these days. This fact, if nothing else, prompted the under-mentioned poem:-



I am a poor little post-box, but lately I feel so sad,
For it seems nobody uses me now and really that's too bad,
I'm up here along the Ridgeway Path, away from all the fun,
It's only nice up here in summer, then at least you get the sun.

The walkers, the joggers, the naturalists, they sometimes notice me,
But they are no letter writers, at least as far as I can see,
Oh! some days I dream I'm in the village or along some busy street,
Then at least people would use me or name me as a place to meet.

Up here I feel redundant, one among the many I could mention,
Who have been left to retire by the Post Office without so much
as a pension,
So, whenever next you see me, as you chance to pass me by,
It might not be your imagination if you think you hear a sigh.