

ROUNABOUT RINGWOOD & SURROUNDING VILLAGES

NOW and THEN

Bridge House, West Street.

Bridge House is probably the most imposing house in West Street. It is listed as a three-storey brick structure with a five bay front, a central doorway with Doric columns and a frontage of original railings. However there are very few old photographs of Bridge House, as most photographers seem to have been keener on taking images of the north side of the street, particularly the picturesque old thatched cottages opposite.

In the previous issue of Rounda-

been a keen promoter of temperance! She was also a generous benefactress to Ringwood, building and donating the since-demolished Lecture Hall in Christchurch Road, on the stipulation that no alcohol would be served on the premises.

When Sarah died in 1883 the brewery was left to her nephew Reginald Jennings, the son of her sister Elizabeth who had been a pioneer emigrant to Australia. Mr Jennings came back from Australia to live

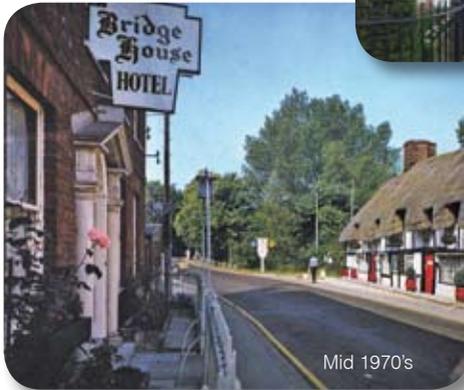
at Bridge House whilst overseeing the brewery until its sale in 1887.

Bridge House then became the home of Ringwood doctor Henry Geary Dyer, his wife Annie and their children Capel, Muriel and Norah. Sadly Dr Dyer died at an early age in 1900 but his widow and children continued to live on in their home for some years.

For a long period during the mid-20th century Bridge House became a hotel with beautiful gardens stretching down to the Millstream. In 1976 the house was acquired by Armfield Ltd as offices, which it remains to the present day. The firm is an offshoot of the original company founded by Joseph J Armfield in the 19th century in Christchurch Road.

bout Ringwood I described how Alexander and Elizabeth Carter moved from their home at Greyfriars to Bridge House in West Street in 1806. The house was newly built by Alexander on the site of the house of his father-in-law Samuel Scutt who owned the brewery next door. In 1802 Mr Scutt had handed over his business to his son-in-law, which from then onwards was known as Carter's brewery. Despite Alexander and Elizabeth having a large family, only their daughter Elizabeth married and had children. In 1841 her bachelor brother Alexander and his spinster sisters Sarah, Caroline and Jane were still living in their family home and running the brewery in partnership. The last to survive was Sarah Carter who, strangely for a brewery-owner, was

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