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(F-11C, Ro-7B, ★ 12A, P, C, R, W, G-5B) (BWT) 15C

Forge links English town, Detroit

SNOWSHILL WAS JUST another picturesque English village when I first drove into it, with my friend Vera Schad at the wheel beside me. I had no way of knowing then that another old friend came from here.

For 300 years, Snowhill was the home of the blacksmith shop that I have visited so often at Greenfield Village in Dearborn. It stood on that empty lot at the curve of the street, where flower gardens now bloom.

A tiny sign on the adjacent building reads "The Old Forge."

I came to Snowhill in Gloucestershire to visit Hans and Vera Schad, who once managed the well-known Shakespeare Hotel half-an-hour's drive north in Stratford-Upon-Avon, and now manage the Snowhill Arms. A few minutes in the peaceful atmosphere of Snowhill, and you would understand why they left the beam-and-plaster elegance of the Shakespeare for the noise and hard work of a village pub.

From the pub you can walk left around the village church or right around the village church; either way you end up on the single street of Snowhill, the road winding up hill and disappearing into countryside again.

The Cotswolds are full of hamlets like this, each built of the Cotswold stone on which they stand,



1-of-a-kind traveler
Iris Jones
contributing travel editor

straight-alled, two-story buildings of large, square-cut stone, with steep stone roofs and dry stone fences. The English have a wonderful way with flowers, so roses often climb the stone houses and their stone-terraced gardens.

PUBS LIKE THE Snowhill Arms have always been the center of English village life and they still draw standing-room-only crowds almost every afternoon and evening. There are no hotel accommodations at the Arms, but locals come from 15 miles around to play darts and skittles under the beamed ceiling of the pub.

Hans serves pints of beer as fast as he can pull the pump. Vera and her daughter cook "pub meals" in the adjacent kitchen: cottage pie, steak and chips, lasagna, roast beef sandwiches.

Hans always reserves a center booth for local people, who come in after dinner for a drink. Mr. Williams, with his shock of white hair, has been a familiar sight in town for years. His photograph is on the front of a AAA brochure there on the wall; the picture made Snowhill briefly famous.

Shella Wilkes, a young woman who sometimes helps out at the Arms, was born in Springhill Cottage, and her grandmother was born there before her. The young man leaning against the bar goes back many generations in Rose Cottage; Charles Keyte invented a sewing machine there, now displayed in the British Science Museum in Kensington.

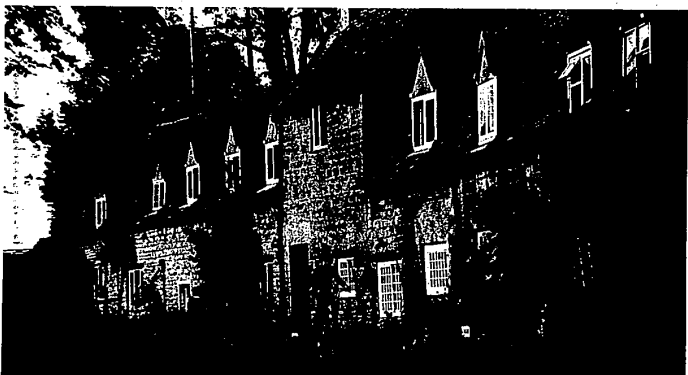
JUST ANOTHER delightful English village I would have said, with no connection to my life, until I heard about the old blacksmith shop. I was standing behind the pub, where a skittles (bowling) alley recently was opened, telling young Angie Schad about Greenfield Village.

"I've seen buildings like these before," I said. "There is a cottage and a blacksmith shop in a restored village in Dearborn."



IRIS JONES

A gardener in Snowhill, England, tends her flowers among cottages built of the Cotswold stone on which they stand.



IRIS JONES

It's impossible to get lost when riding through Snowhill — the picturesque English village has only one street.

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"I think the blacksmith shop came from here," she said. There it was on the pub wall, the story about a forge built in Snowhill in the early 1600s and purchased by Henry Ford 300 years later. The Greenfield Village cottage comes from another hamlet called Chedworth.

The Arms is one of 17 pubs and inns owned by Donnington Brewery, one of thousands of friendly neighborhood gathering places in England. Telephone Broadway 2553 if you'd like to raise a pint, or contact the Pub Information Center at 2 Caxton St. London SW1, England. For other information, contact the British Tourist Authority, 875 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 60611.

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