



The 'new' **Green Dragon pub** was the meeting place for the OBE (Old Boys' Effort) which was set up to raise funds for Northern Woods families who had family members in the forces. They held dances in the village hall and took part in various charitable events. The area covered for recipients of the fund makes interesting reading for us today: "from the Green Dragon, to Sedgmoor House, Wayside, Straight Bit (including Golf Links Road), to Shirley's Dump, Northend Woods, Blind Lane to The Bourne and thence back to the Green Dragon".

This reveals that the villagers still saw themselves living in separate hamlets, mainly due to the parish boundaries in which their homes were situated.



**Strathcona** was a large house with an impressive drive that has now been replaced by Strathcona Close. From 1936 (if not earlier) until 1938 Mrs Lucy Dorothea Greaves and possibly her daughter, Agnes, were living there. By 1939 they had moved to Dorset. The house therefore became vacant.

Residences like this, safe in the countryside, were in demand for companies seeking safety from the prospect of city bombing. In 1939 Lloyds Insurance company moved almost 500 of their staff to offices at Pinewood Film Studios and it would appear that they also moved some of their staff to Strathcona. The

adjoining bath house was, apparently, to be used as a decontamination centre in case of gas attack but evidence for this remains scant.

It is possible that the work being done at Strathcona was not simply to safeguard important documents but to peruse the insurance policies of large foreign companies, now behind enemy lines, which could hold vital information for the war effort. The Germans stopped producing maps of their country in the early 1930s and it became imperative that up-to-date maps of their towns and factories were created for the Allies. British companies who had insured these businesses before the war were now requested to hand in these insurance policies so that any relevant documents could be examined. By the time of the 1939 Register quite a number of Lloyds staff were billeted with local families and by 1946, when the war was over, ten staff members are actually listed as living in Strathcona itself. The house was later used as accommodation for service workers such as doctors and nurses.



The **Home Guard's guard room** was along Links Road at **North End House**, the residence of Mr Edwin (Ted) Gomme. He allowed them the use of his annexe and also his hard tennis court for drill. The house, which is still there, also had the luxury of an air-raid shelter. In 1942 the platoon became part of 'C' Company, 4<sup>th</sup> Bucks Battalion.

When war was declared on Sept 3<sup>rd</sup> 1939 the Civil Defence units, as they were then called, sprang into action. It was only a few hours later that school children from Marylebone and Ealing arrived as evacuees.

When the threat of invasion loomed a movable barrier was prepared at the top of Sheepridge Lane should the enemy swoop in from the Thames at Bourne End. The Home Guard also manned their control base, a private residence at the bottom of Blind Lane, for the same reason, although the fear of possible airborne paratroopers was also a concern. The air raid sirens regularly went off in the paper mills below but there were no public air-raid shelters in the village.