

THE END OF BAKING

HARRY BENNETT

By 1947 the Dramatics Society was revived under the direction of Percy Winter a retired accountant living in Grevel Lane. I was roped in as chief comedian playing Bottom in the Midsummer Night's Dream, pantomime dames etc.



Charlie Ladbrook (left) and Harry as Hitler and Kaiser Bull

In 1955 I was attracted into free masonry and was initiated in Chipping Campden Lodge. My experience in the dramatic society proved useful here, for the performing of the ceremonies required a good memory and a certain amount of dramatic art. In 1956 I became secretary of the lodge of instruction a post I held for 10 years. In 1969 I became Master of the Lodge an office held for 1 year only. In 1973 I was given provincial grand lodge honours as assistant director of ceremonies. In 1986 I was promoted Past Provincial Grand Registrar. In 1976 I became Lodge Treasurer and kept this office for ten years. I also joined the Gloucestershire Masonic Bowling Association and in 1967 became area representative, in 1979 I served my year as Chairman and then became Secretary for 10 years and then back to Area Representative. In 1992 I retired from office after 25 years service. But hope to continue for some years yet. Since writing the above I have had to give up bowling, the Gloucestershire MBA made me a Vice President as I had been a member longer than anyone in Gloucestershire. I joined Campden bowling club in the 1950's and I am now President.



Harry and Veronica Bennett at the door of the shop

In 1967 I began to realise there was very little future in the baking trade as we knew it. Bread consumption was declining, the cost of door to door delivery was escalating and my asthma was getting worse, and the hernia predicted by the army doctor had arrived, so I decided to retire from baking. I sold the bread rounds to Victor Gabb, had the hernia put right, enlarged the shop and re-opened as a Delicatessen, Tourist Lines etc. This took a time to build up but eventually started to prosper. In 1976 Charlie and Vicky asked if they could come into the business with me. Till then I was just going quietly along to retirement, but now we began to expand into cheese, cooked meats etc. I had always kept to

non-perishable goods. In 1979 I retired after 51 years of work, but I still did 1½ days a week for some time, and continued to live over the shop. in 1991 we decided It was time to find a smaller place to live so we bought a flat In the old Grammar School Mews. After looking at the front of the Grammar School for sixty years I am now going to contemplate the back of it for the next sixty.