

Here is a pictorial cross-section of Selside's community. Top left: Mrs. Annie Sunter is a farmer's daughter and works on the farm—but (centre inset) with Mrs. Winnie Sunter and Mrs. Edith Sedgwick she helps to run the local railway signal box. Mrs. Winnie Sunter is seen in the spick and span box (bottom left). Top right is the Town Hall and bottom right the school—with full complement of teacher and scholars.

3 Women Run Signal Box

SELSIDE, a few miles north of Horton-in-Ribblesdale, is one of those bleak, raw, tucked-away Dales' hamlets which have practically no direct communication with the outside world.

It is justly famed for its simple rugged beauty, and perhaps more for its proximity to that shrine of "Pot Hoilers," Alum Pot.

Moulded and brought up to a hard life, its sons and daughters are playing their part in the national effort. Some of its sons are still tilling the soil and tending their sheep as their forefathers have done for centuries; others are bearing arms; and its daughters have boldly stepped in and filled the gaps in the work of the communal life.

The Signal Box

THREE of them, Mrs. Annie Sunter, Mrs. Winnie Sunter, and Mrs. Edith Sedgwick, "man"—or should it be "woman"?—the small but important signal-box on the L.M.S. main line which borders one side of the village. They take an eight-hours' spell of duty each, splitting the day into three duties, 24 hours a day, every week, every day, including Sundays.

The box itself bears ample evidence of the handiwork of a dale's lassie with her traditional thoroughness and cleanliness. The black-leaded stove would be the pride of many a Yorkshire industrial district housewife!

Mrs. Annie Sunter is a farmer's daughter, and when she is not at work in the box she often lends a helping hand on the farm.

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The Town Hall

THEN there is "Jim Will" Morphett. He seems to be "Mayor" of this little hamlet—it has no gas, no electricity, no telephone, no sewerage, no post office, and only a water supply "of sorts," but it has a Town Hall complete with a very small posting box.

Before the war, this bare, limestone walled building was used as a meeting place and as a recreation-room. Its furnishings are rude, but it sufficed for simple needs.

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The School

MISS O. SWALWELL is in charge of the eight children who attend the village school, which is forever "going to be closed down," but which for ever lives to fight another day.

There is no school bus, and many of the children have to walk miles from their remote homes.

The Vicar of Horton, the Rev. J. H. Renton, in whose parish Selside is, tells me the church records show several names of dwellers at Selside as far back as the sixteenth

century—one of them as early as 1538.

Selside's headache is communication with the outside world. "Jim Will" tried to get a call-box erected in the village, but nothing has been installed yet. Communication with the outside world is difficult—in fact, there are times when it is well nigh impossible.

Difficult—

PRESENT procedure of transmitting an urgent message is complicated:—

During the day, when Horton-in-Ribblesdale station is open, the message is taken to the signal-box at Selside. The person on duty uses the railway company's private telephone to Horton signal-box.

The signalman there shouts his message across the lines to the stationmaster at the station.

The stationmaster, Mr. F. Hodgson, then uses the G.P.O. telephone at the station to transmit the message further afield, debiting the sender with the cost of the call.

He collects payment when he next visits Selside Box.

—And Still More So

THIS procedure is comparatively simple when Horton station is open, but when it is closed, which it is for nearly 12 hours every night, the method is more laborious.

Horton Box then passes the message on to Helwith Bridge Box, further down the line; in turn Helwith gets it through to Settle Station—and then once again the G.P.O. system is used.

"Jim Will" has other ideas he would like to see brought to fruition, but he thinks that the telephone should come first.

Don't you?

Leslie Overend