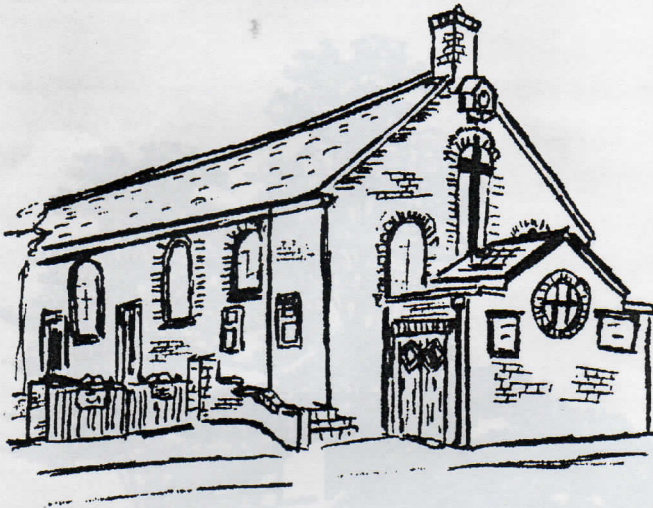


Two Gates  
Ragged School



THE GHOST  
of  
SPIRIT HOLE



**THE GHOST**  
**of**  
**SPRIT HOLE**

## THE GHOST OF SPIRIT HOLE

This one time secluded place gets its name from a romance, which took place in 1666, during the reign of Charles II. the authentic record of this romance was given by Timothy Burley, who kept a farm at nearby 'Cookoo's Corner'. His record states that a young lady named Caroline Venlor lived on this farm, when most of the area was common land, adjoining the Park. Carolines father was a sheep farmer and took weekly supplies of wool to Halesowen market, which was held on Sundays. He also excircized his right to hunt in the Park and graze his sheep on the common.

Caroline fell in love with a shepherd named Harold, but her father was bitterly opposed to the match, as Harold's prospects were none to good. Her good looks and commanding personality also attracted the attention of the squire's son, who was a rich man and lived in a mansion near by. When the squire heard of this, he did his utmost to steer the boys affections towards a lady more in keeping with his own station in life. Carolines father, on the other hand, seeing the possibilities for his daughter, encouraged the young gallant and made him welcome to his home. Consequently, the shepherd lad and Caroline did their courting in secret. This was not difficult, owing to the close proximity of the Park and the woodland at that time.

The squire was a business man, specialising in

hardware and nails. He perfected a machine to produce nails, and was so successful he dominated the market and began exporting to America. Seeing the possibilities of the American market, the squire sent his son there. He had the two fold purpose of expanding his business and ending his son's romance with Caroline.

The son travelled extensively in America and forgot Caroline. When he had more time for reflection however, his thoughts turned towards home. he wrote a letter to Caroline, asking her to marry him and settle in America. However, Caroline and Harold the shepherd boy, were now courting in earnest, and she declined the offer.

One night, as they were taking their favourite walk round Homer Hill, they saw between the trees, an apparition. It resembled the squire's son and he seemed to be in great pain. So vivid and real was the apparition that they fled to walk home in terror.

A few weeks later, the squire received a letter from America, with the sad news, that his son had been attacked in a lonely part of North America, and had died from his wounds. The date of his death it was later confirmed, co-incided with the date the apparition was seen. For many years afterwards, the spirit appeared annually on the date of his death which was just before Christmas.

From that day to this, the place has been known as  
**Spirit Hole**