



Mr Ivor Sage and Mrs Ann Sage pictured in their Gosberton Clough home.

# Thirty years of teaching in a silent world

Welshman Mr Ivor Sage is to celebrate his second retirement with a month in the sun. At the end of December, with his wife Ann, he will leave Willow Cottage, Broad Drove, Gosberton Clough for a hotel holiday in Spain — taking advantage of the special arrangements for pensioners.

It was just a fortnight ago that Mr Sage, 72 in January, came to the end of nearly nine years as a peripatetic teacher of the deaf.

During these years he has visited 90 schools from Old Leake in the north to Sutton Bridge in the south coaching children with hearing difficulties in English, arithmetic and other school subjects.

"This is the part I'm going to miss, seeing all the different children and meeting the staff of so many schools," he said.

He has, he says, enjoyed his time with South Lincolnshire children even more than the rather enclosed world of the famous School for the Deaf in Doncaster where he worked for 21 years, 12 of them as deputy head.

## DEGREES

When he went there at the end of the war, they were taking children with varying degrees of deafness, but now the intake is restricted to the totally deaf.

"Residential schools are not needed so much now, because modern thinking is to set up a special unit in a selected local school. The

children have a teacher of their own, but for classes where they are not at a disadvantage, they join the other children. It is a much better system they are not isolated," he says.

Ivor Sage, born in South Wales, is partially deaf himself and has to wear a hearing

## by Sheila Robson

aid. Which gives him an intuitive sympathy with the children he has tried to help.

A true Welshman, rugby was — and is — the great love of his life. He played for Wales senior secondary schools and later for London Welsh and his county cap gained as a 16-year-old schoolboy is a prized possession.

But he has other, less happy, relics of those days. For a nose broken in the scrum began to affect his hearing and eventually decided him on switching from ordinary teaching to deaf teaching.

He and his wife have two daughters and twin sons. "The boys played rugby at school but I would not let them stay in the game after that, I had seen what it could

do," he commented.

In his time there were 250 children resident at the Doncaster School. "It's a silent world for them, I had a foot in both worlds so I know what it is like" he said.

The teachers get very involved. So much so that they often had to be persuaded quite hard to get away from the premises in their leisure time and follow other interests.

Mrs Sage gave one example of this when she said that a member of the staff who was a Bachelor of Arts had appealed for her help in totting-up prices at a school bazaar.

"She said to me that she couldn't count up to more than five any more," said Mrs Sage, adding that learning one letter or one word a year could be regarded as tremendous achievement for some of the children.

Mrs Sage had her own important part in this world. Apart from living on school premises and bringing up their own family, it was her interest in trying to widen the horizons of the pupils that prompted her to go to flower arrangement classes, in order to have the skill to teach the girls.

## FLORIST

"They were very good, it was something for which they did not need hearing," she said, adding that one pupil had landed a job with a florist and others taken the subject for the Duke of Edinburgh silver award.

Her idea of helping certainly provided a spin-off for