Why did the two brothers keep the secret?

For years, villagers believed that Endley Farm was haunted.

The farm was owned by two brothers, Joe and Bob Cox.

They employed a few farmhands, but no one was willing to work there long.

Every time a worker gave up his job, he told the same story.

Farm labourers said that they always woke up to find that work had been done overnight.

Hay had been cut and cowsheds had been cleaned.

A farm worker, who stayed up all night, claimed to have seen a figure cutting corn in the moonlight.

In time, it became an accepted fact that the Cox brothers employed a conscientious ghost that did most of their work for them.

No one suspected that there might be someone else on the farm who had never been seen.

This was indeed the case.

A short time ago, villagers were astonished to learn that the ghost of Endley had died.

Everyone went to the funeral, for the 'ghost' was none other than Eric Cox, a third brother who was supposed to have died as a young man.

After the funeral, Joe and Bob revealed a secret which they had kept for over fifty years.

Eric had been the eldest son of the family, very much older than his two brothers.

He had been obliged to join the army during the Second World War.

As he hated army life, he decided to desert his regiment.

When he learnt that he would be sent abroad, he returned to the farm and his father hid him until the end of the war.

Fearing the authorities, Eric remained in hiding after the war as well.

His father told everybody that Eric had been killed in action. The only other people who knew the secret were Joe and Bob.

They did not even tell their wives.

When their father died, they thought it their duty to keep Eric in hiding.

All these years, Eric had lived as a recluse.

He used to sleep during the day and work at night, quite unaware of the fact that he had become the ghost of Endley.

When he died, however, his brothers found it impossible to keep the secret any longer.

Eric joined the army during the Second World War, but hated army life, so he deserted.

He returned to the farm where his father hid him until the end of the war, and he remained in hiding after the war.

His father told everyone that he had been killed in action.

Joe and Bob kept the secret, so Eric lived as a recluse.

He slept during the day and worked at night, so he became the 'ghost of Endley'.

When I came into work one morning, I noticed that work had been done overnight, hay had been cut, and the cowsheds and other buildings had been cleaned, so I decided to stay up all the next night to try to solve the mystery. (I didn't tell Joe and Bob, of course.) I hid in the barn and waited.

Obviously, I fell asleep because I suddenly woke up to find that it was dark.

I went straight to the cowshed and found that it had already been cleaned.

Then I went out to the fields where I could just see a figure working; I couldn't see whether it was a man, or a woman, or perhaps a ghost.

I was scared, so I rushed back to the farmhouse and woke up the others.

We all went out to the fields to see who it was, but when we got there, there was no one there.

When I was in the fields before, I didn't know what or who the figure was.

But now I was sure it was a ghost, so I immediately decided not to work at Endley Farm any longer and handed in my resignation.

When I told my story to the villagers, many of them still didn't believe me, even though they knew that something strange had been going on at Endley Farm for years.

You must give in your homework on Friday.

I didn't need my bicycle anymore more so I gave it away to someone who couldn't afford one.

Eric didn't want to give himself up to the authorities because he had deserted.

I can't tell a lie.

We really must say goodbye now.

I can never tell the difference between their cat and ours.

If that's what you think, say so.

Excuse me.

Can you tell me the time?

I'd like you to make a speech at the wedding.

He'll do his best to win.

Can you do me a favour?

He never makes a mistake.

I suppose this house is very old.

He is supposed to speak English very well.

He was supposed to meet me at the station, but he didn't come.

He used to work here when he was younger.

He was working in the garden when I saw him.

While farmhands stayed at Endley Farm, it never occurred to them that there was someone in hiding on the farm.

Eric remained in hiding after the war because he feared the penalty he might receive for his desertion.

When did the identity of the 'ghost' become known? When Joe and Bob felt they would have to have their brother buried.

Farm labourers said that on waking up, they would find work had been done.

Eric had been killed while fighting with his regiment.

Joe and Bob were the only other people who knew the secret and did not even tell their wives.

He was conscripted during the Second World War.

All these years, Eric had lived the life of a hermit.

He used to work at night, never realizing that he had become the ghost of Endley.