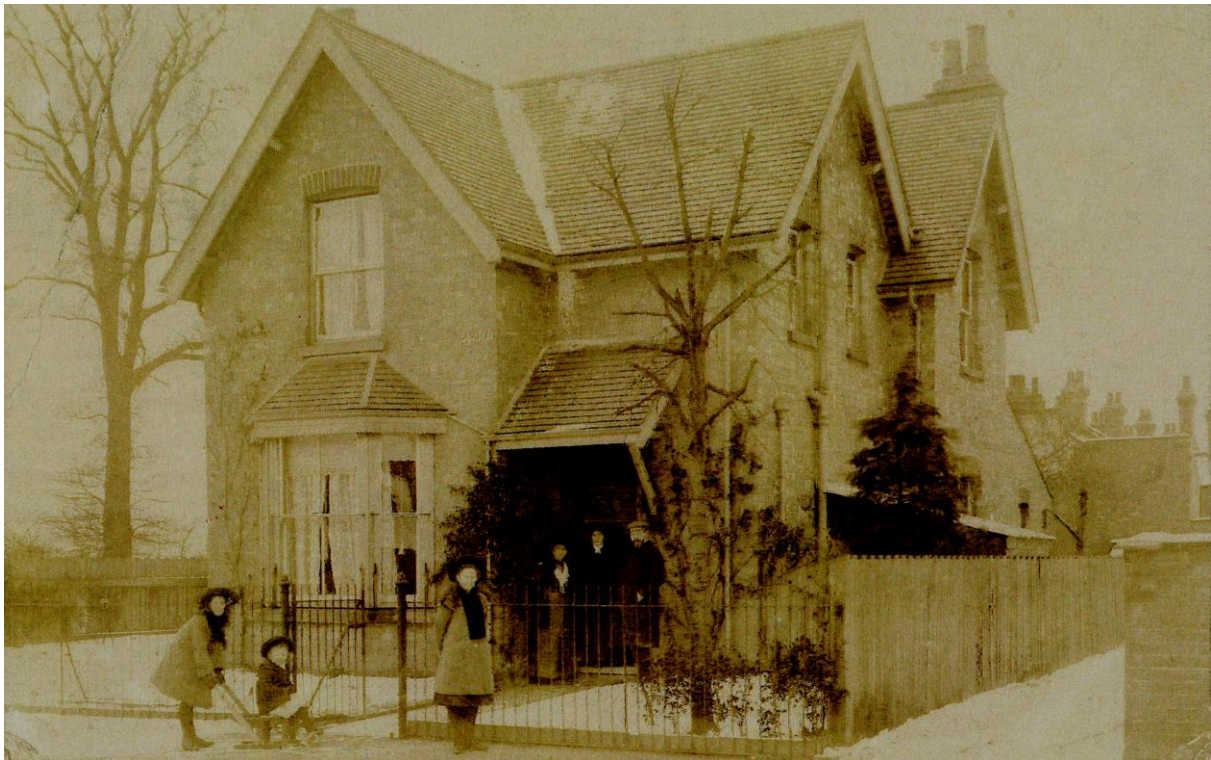

Lillington Local History Society



Our fourth on-line “meeting” November 2020



1 Elm Road, on the corner with Farm Road. Image taken around 1900. *Peter Coulls collection*



Who might the people be?

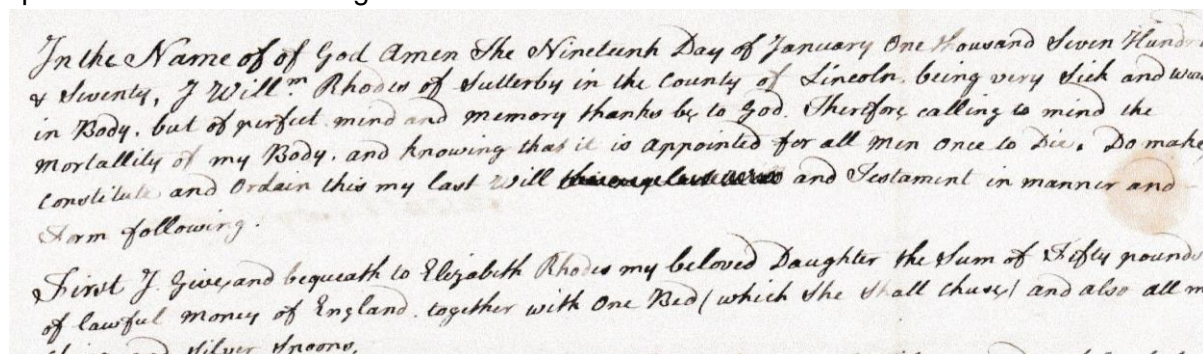
We know Charles and Emily Davis were living here with their 14 year old daughter in 1911.

Charles was a chemist in Leamington.

LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

I am lucky enough to have a copy of the Last Will and Testament made by my great-great-great-great-grandfather in 1770. He had twelve children, of whom nine survived. His first wife died in childbirth, and from her prominence in the will, it appears that his first born, Elizabeth, kept house for him after her mother's death.

The preamble to the will is magnificent



In the Name of of God Amen The Nineteenth Day of January One thousand Seven Hundred & Seventy, I Will^m Rhodes of Sutterby in the County of Lincoln, being very Sick and weak in Body, but of perfect mind and memory thanks be to God. Therefore calling to mind the mortality of my Body, and knowing that it is appointed for all men once to Die, Do make constitute and Ordain this my last Will ~~thereof last~~ and Testament in manner and Form following.

First I Give and bequeath to Elizabeth Rhodes my beloved Daughter the Sum of Fifty pounds, of Lawful Money of England, together with One Bed (which She shall chuse) and also all my China and Silver Spoons.

In the Name of God Amen The Nineteenth Day of January One thousand Seven Hundred & Seventy, I Will^m Rhodes of Sutterby in the County of Lincoln, being very Sick and weak in Body, but of perfect mind and memory thanks be to God. Therefore calling to mind the mortality of my Body, and knowing that it is appointed for all men once to Die, Do make Constitute and Ordain this my last will and Testament in manner and Form following:

The terms of the will are interesting.

Elizabeth, named first as his “beloved daughter”, is to receive “the sum of Fifty pounds, of Lawful Money of England, together with One Bed (which She shall chuse) and also all my China and Silver Spoons.”

Each son received £50 as well, about £9,000 in today's money, and some of the livestock. The eldest son, John, received everything else after the legacies had been paid. Let's hope it wasn't his bed that Elizabeth chose!



My ancestor, also William, received £50, a mare and some sheep. I don't know where the £50 went, but he and his family worked and lived as agricultural labourers in a nearby village for most of the following century. His two youngest brothers, George and Richard, emigrated to Virginia.

CDMR

THE IMPACT OF LOCKDOWN ON LILLINGTON PARISH CHURCH



March 8 2020, Sunday: at church, 9.30 Holy Communion: No handshake at the Peace and no chalice if you don't want to.

March 15. 6.30pm: Possibly our last Choral Evensong at St Mary Magdalene for a very long time, and we went out with one of the best we've ever sung- Rachael Smith, choir mistress, (vicar's sister) augmented our choir with a few other voices and we sang our hearts out. Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis, Stanford in C: God be in my Head, Wilby: Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring, Bach.

March 18. Archbishop Justin Welby cancels all church services.
Judy Cooke

You can read Judy's full diary of the early part of the Lockdown on the Lillington Local History website
The website address is: www.lillingtonhistory.org

Church Bells Silence

Every Anglican church in England has at least one bell, and about five thousand, a third of the total, have a ringing peal of five or more. Reformers of the past have tried to control the occasions on which bells may be rung and who may ring them, but never before the 20th century has there been any general ban on ringing.

In the Great War of 1914 – 1918 the Defence of the Realm Acts allowed the government to make regulations to prevent invasion and to keep morale high at home. Anything which might be construed as communicating with the enemy was immediately suspect. The chiming of clocks and bells was thought to be a possible assistance to enemy airships, and in March 1916 was specifically banned wherever lighting restrictions were in force, essentially during the hours of darkness. The vicar of Lillington fell foul of this ban, as reported in the Leamington Courier of 3rd November, 1916: - *The Vicar, the Revd CC Brookes, fined 10 shillings for allowing the church clock to strike at night between the hours during which the Lighting Restriction Regulations were in force. Mr Duggins, the Clerk, had previously been cautioned in 1915.*

It is well known that bellringing was banned during WW2, on the rather fanciful grounds that bells would be rung as a warning of invasion. It is as well that this was never put to the test, and other strategies successfully prevented an invasion, as there were few ringers available to ring, and very many houses would have been out of earshot anyway. The ban lasted three years. It came into force on 13th June, 1940, and was lifted on Easter Sunday, 25th April, 1943, though ringing had been specially permitted on Sunday 15th November, 1942 to celebrate the Allied victory at El Alamein, and again on Christmas Day the same year.

Lillington bells have not been rung since March due to COVID-19 restrictions on the gathering together of the bellringers, though the clock has continued to strike thanks to electric winding. Public Sunday services began again on 20th September, but without the sound of the bells, and we must hope their silence does not have to last another three years!

RICHARD TAULBUT

This Newsletter is published by the Lillington Local History Society, c/o Lillington Free Church, Cubbington Road, Leamington Spa, CV32 7AL The views expressed in the Newsletter are personal to the contributors and are not necessarily the views of the Society.

LILLINGTON'S TELEPHONE BOXES



"I have a memory relating to the phone box at the end of Lime Avenue in the 1980s. I don't think it was a red one, by that time, but it doubtless replaced a red one.

My children were small, and I taught evening classes, so that I could be at home when the older two came home from school. My husband worked long hours, and brought work home in the evenings. I used to be waiting on the doorstep - we only had one car - and I had to get

up the road to Blackdown, to Campion or out at Sydenham, fairly smartly, in time to start at 7.30 pm. *Image Bryan Hicks*

On the night in question, I returned just after 9.45 pm, as usual, but couldn't get into the house. I tried front and back, to no avail - my keys wouldn't work. Ringing the doorbell didn't work - and our doorbell could wake the dead!

This was in the days before the ubiquitous mobile phone, so, in despair, I went to the phone box, and asked to make a reverse-charge call to our home number (I had no loose change). It rang and rang - no answer. By this stage, I was thinking something dreadful had happened - why otherwise didn't Jim answer - or his mother, who was staying with us? Then a groggy 8-year old answered, having been woken by the phone. She had no idea what a reverse-charge call meant, so interrupted Dad at his desk. He too was nonplussed. He hadn't locked the doors, and as far as he knew, Grandma was watching her favourite programme on TV.

The doors were duly unlocked, and we searched for Grandma - who it turned out had grown tired of her own company and TV, switched everything off, locked all the doors and had gone off to bed.

To add insult to injury, she was sitting up in bed eating chocolates! " **Margaret Rushton**



"The ones I remember using - Crown Way (in front of what is now Balti-Chef), Pound Lane on the corner of Grange Road and the one I used most often on Mason Avenue by the end of Buckley Road.

I remember spending hours waiting for people to finish and the feeling of despair when you saw they had a stack of coins on the ledge by the phone I remember using the one in Crown Way on 10th May 1980 as it was my wedding day and I needed to sort out some last minute arrangements."

Paul Howell

PRESSING BUTTONS A OR B

When pound notes were first issued in the early years of the last century, many people were loathe to accept the replacement of metal sovereigns, yet when more recently the notes were replaced with coinage there were again further objections. People get used to what they know and changes are not readily accepted. Can you imagine what residents must have thought when telephone kiosks sprung up in picturesque villages, their garish red colour standing out from the more subdued natural hues of the countryside? However, they came to be loved and happily accepted alongside traditional half-timbered buildings: there was strong resistance to their removals, such that many have now been left in situ, serving other purposes such as miniature village greenhouses and libraries and at the top of Leamington's Parade, there is a former telephone kiosk used to house a defibrillator to assist those having heart attacks.

The well-known design of the telephone kiosk is thanks to the architect Sir Giles Gilbert Scott who apparently based its roof design on mausoleums in St. Pancras Old Churchyard and at Dulwich Art Gallery. They were a common sight and it is interesting to see old black and white films where people requiring urgent contact run pell-mell along the street to reach the kiosk. Even policemen relied on them.

Actually the police had another facility which comprised a free-standing column with a light in the top which flashed when headquarters wished to impart some message or information to the officer on duty in that particular area and he was required to "keep an eye" on the light since he was expected to attend to the call within a specified period and if he left it longer he would be expected to explain matters on his return to the station. In the Avoncroft Museum of Buildings at Bromsgrove there is a display of original telephone boxes through the years. Residents without their own telephone, and that was most people, often had to walk considerable distances to make their calls. It was possible to receive calls at the kiosks, if one knew when to expect them and there was the possibility that some stranger might answer.



Younger people who have the mobile telephone at their beck and call must find it difficult to imagine what a performance it could be to make a call from a kiosk. If my memory is correct one had to dial the number and when it was answered, it was necessary to press "Button A" to get a connection, but only for a specified period, after which the call would terminate. Long distant calls had to be made via the operator and if the connection was not possible, one would be asked to press "Button B" to have one's money returned. Little did people know in those days that within a few years it was going to be possible to make calls from the garden



or even from the bus.

Graham Cooper

LILLINGTON CofE SCHOOL : INSPECTION REPORTS

Annual Report of Inspector. Form 17a.

Letters should be addressed—
"The Secretary,
Education Department,
Whitehall,
London, S.W."

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT,
24th April 1890

At the head of Letters relating to this case write—
Lillington C. C. School.
6 County of Warwick No. 16555

N.B.—1.—Letters containing enclosures should comment on them specifically, with a line in the margin for each.
2.—Write clearly, on good FOLIO paper of the same size as this sheet.
3.—Applications relating to different Schools are to be made in separate letters.

RES. SIR,

The Report of Her Majesty's Inspector upon this School has been examined, and payment of the grant allowed, according to the following Schedule (*over*), will be made in the course of a few days.

Their Lordships' decision as to the amount of the Grant to be paid, the Report of Her Majesty's Inspector, and any remarks contained in this Form, should be at once communicated to the Managers, and to all persons whom they may concern.

a.b.g.m.

The original handwritten Inspectors' reports on Lillington School for the period 1881-1911 are in the care of the Society.

Reports were made annually by government inspectors [HMI] and provide a unique and objective insight into the school's performance and development.

The reports were sent to the Vicar as Chairman of the School Managers. They were not available to parents.

Important features include:

- The growing number of pupils as Lillington increases in size at the end of the Victorian period
- Inspectors' assessments of the quality of teaching and learning
- Gender differences in the curriculum: Cottage gardening for boys, laundry and dairy work for girls in 1901
- The statistical data relating to standards and attendance used to calculate the size of the school's financial grant for the following year
- Recommended changes and improvements to the building

17a
16555

Lillington C. C. School,
(Warwick).

SUMMARY OF THE INSPECTOR'S REPORT ON THE SCHOOL AND REMARKS (IF ANY) TO BE

Mixed School. "Discipline and singing by note good. Songs very good. The work of the lower Standards is well done and the writing on paper is of good quality. Arithmetic good in the lower Standards and pretty good in the third, fourth and fifth Standards, very moderate in the sixth Standard."

A detailed analysis of each report, researched by Larry Connor, can be found on the Lillington Local History Society website. The website address is: www.lillingtonhistory.org



Image of school reproduced by kind permission of Warwickshire County Record Office CR 3379/4 img 9621
Images of report pages: Lillington Local History Society

ROBERT JAMES COOMBES

We are especially sad to have to mark the sudden death of Bob Coombes on 27th August at the age of 85. He was a faithful supporter of Lillington Local History Society in spite of health problems and had the Society been formed some twenty years earlier, there is every prospect that he would have played a significant part in its organisation. As it was, his advice and suggestions proved useful contributions to its arrangements.

Bob was born in Nottingham in 1934 and when his parents' marriage broke down he went to live with his grandparents. His mother remarried and he moved to join her from the bright electric lights of Nottingham to the then-gaslighting of Leamington in 1949. He finished his education at Campion School and at 15 started an apprenticeship with English Rose in Warwick. He did his National Service in the RAF, thoroughly enjoying the experience and making lifelong good friends whom he continued to meet regularly for lunch until very recently; he was President of the local RAF Association for 30 years. His career brought him back to English Rose, then to Cape Engineering and ultimately in 1951 to Wallwin Pumps until his early retirement in 1995.



Bob was an avid follower of politics and was elected Councillor to Leamington Borough in 1965. Warwick District Council was established in 1973 under new Local Government legislation and he was elected one of the founding members, where he served for 30 years until his retirement in 1995. His particular interest was in housing and he became Chairman of the Housing Committee.

As one of the Leamington Spa Councillors on Warwick District Council he served as Mayor of Royal Leamington Spa in 1977-78 when he contributed enormously to the local celebrations for the Silver Jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen, which he very much enjoyed. Then in 1991-92 Bob was elected Chairman of the District Council. In addition, he was a Trustee of the local Citizens' Advice Bureau and Chairman of the Governors of Telford School.

He was married to Pamela and had two daughters - Caroline and Emma - and had two grandchildren.

Were it not for the coronavirus regulations, the congregation at his funeral would have almost certainly been extensive but he will be fondly remembered by very many in the Society and we very much hope that Pamela will be able to join our meetings when at last they can be resumed, thereby continuing our association with the Coombes Family.

GRAHAM E. COOPER

Image R.Coombes 1977

Lillington Local History Society Website

