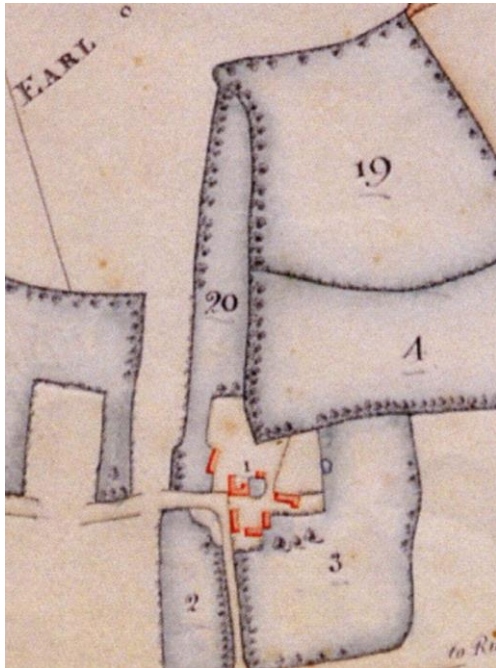

Lillington Local History Society



Our fifth on-line newsletter: January 2021



LIME AVENUE 200 years ago

The Manor Farm buildings are in red. Lime Avenue runs north from Cubbington Road at the bottom of the plan but stops at the farm.

Farm Road goes to the left. The current Bowls Club is in field 4.

The white oblong on the left of the map is the Manor House and its garden.

The modern Lime Avenue runs north along the right-hand boundary of field 20.



LIME AVENUE 100 years ago

The Manor Farm buildings are at the top centre.

You can see why the left-hand portion of the farm house had to be demolished when Lime Avenue was extended northwards.

THE SORCERY OF TEA



What would be your reaction, if, in the recent days when cups and saucers were used to drink tea rather than the now more-artisan "mugs", someone poured their tea from their cup into their saucer to cool and drink it? "Compo" does it in "Last of the Summer Wine" on television. I can recall seeing it done about the 1940s and while it would have been frowned upon in formal company, it was not regarded as exactly earth-shattering in older people's homes.

During the coronavirus shut-down, I have been trawling through old and new books to read and in the former category has been "Tom Brown's Schooldays", an appropriate book for this area owing to the nearness of Rugby.

Towards the end of the book Tom, at the eve of his departure from Rugby, is invited to take tea with one of his

tutors, "whose one enjoyment in the shape of meals was his 'dish of tea' (as our grandmothers called it) in the evening"; and the phrase was apt in his case, for he always poured his out into the saucer before drinking. Then in conversation we have "the master, pausing, with his lips close to his saucerful of tea, and peering at Tom over it," followed by the master's "putting down his empty saucer". Now the tutor would naturally have wished to set high standards to all his students, and the fact that he was content to drink his tea in that way, indicates that, in the 1850s when Thomas Hughes wrote the book, it was still regarded as fairly normal: tea was no longer served in dishes but in cups standing on saucers, whose shape bore some resemblance to dishes, where the tea cooled more quickly than in the cup.

My seeing this done must have been towards the ending of the practice because it is not seen now to my knowledge, but one must never say "never" because, perhaps, there is someone in the wilds of our country who still follows that way.

As a whole, the book is well worth reading since it conveys to us the attitudes and practices of those days, starting in the days of the stagecoach and ending in the railway age. Although there are many examples of great changes which have taken place since then, there are just as many similarities between the two ages. I think, having re-read the book, I should certainly have liked Thomas Hughes.

Graham E. Cooper

1 ELM ROAD

We featured this image of 1 Elm Road in our last edition. Izabella has provided the full story.

The deeds for the property show the following details:



1900: A house known as **Ogden** on Elm Road was built for Mrs Isabella Bacchus (widow) of Lillington Manor. Miss Lily Blanche Higgs of 26 Clarendon Street was the tenant.

In 1905 Louise Davis, a spinster of 55 Clarendon Street, purchased **Elm Cottage** from Mary Josephine Bacchus (Isabella's daughter?)

Although Louise Davis owned the house on Elm Road, she continued to live at 55 Clarendon Street for her whole life. Her brother Charles and his family lived in **Crafnant** until his death in 1945. The mortgage was paid off by Louise Davis in 1920. She died in 1943 and left **Crafnant** to her brother Charles Davis.

It seems likely that the family standing outside **Crafnant** in the photograph was the family of Charles Davis. According to Kelly's Directory of Warwickshire 1912, Charles Davis was listed as M.P.S. chemist & druggist & photographic material dealer, of 90 & 117 Warwick Street. Could one of the ladies standing by the front door be the owner, Louise Davis, Charles' sister? I found a photocopy of this photograph in a folder in the local history section at Lillington Library about ten years ago. The librarian did not recall who had left the folder on the shelf.

The recent LLHS newsletter cover photograph of **Crafnant** was probably taken in the afternoon, when the sun usually blazes through the front windows. The curtains in the front windows have been partly drawn for shade. The garden appears to be very flat and featureless apart from two trees. It is entirely possible that this photograph was taken about 1910 or slightly earlier as one of the climbing roses on the wall to the left of the bay window had grown for long enough to reach the level of the front bedroom window. Interestingly, the railings had not yet been erected on the Farm Road boundary and an old fence remains on that side of the garden. Although 1 Elm Road appears to just have a boundary hedge these days, this has entwined itself into and grown through the railings. The fence that can be seen along the alley boundary remained in place until the late 1970s. The original oak, farm-style, 5 bar side gate was brought down by a storm in 2012. Its original wrought iron hinges still hold the present garden side gate in position to this day.

The house was called **Crafnant** from the time it passed into Louise Davis' ownership. Unfortunately, the original enamelled metal **Crafnant** sign fell off a few years ago. The word Crafnant seems to come from "craf", an old Welsh word for garlic, and "nant", a stream or valley - not a very romantic name. The Llyn (lake) Crafnant and the Afon (river) Crafnant are located in North Wales. Why was the house on Elm Road given such an unusual name? Did the Davis family have a fondness for this beautiful part of Wales or did they possibly have relatives in the area...?

Izabella Topolinska

LILLINGTON AND THE BRICKYARDS

Some of the early history of the brickyards in Leicester Street can be found in the Lillington Board of Health Minute Books 1859 – 69. The following research was carried out by the late Elaine Rumary.

Elaine recorded that on 5th October 1863 “*A plan of a Stable erected by Mr. John Morris in his Brickyard was submitted to the meeting and approved of.*” This implies that there was an existing brickyard under his control. Later, on 7th December 1863, “*Also that the occupiers of the Brickyard be called upon to repair the roads leading out of the Brickyards across the Footpath into the Lillington Road.*”

A Surveyor’s Report of 7th March 1864 records that “*He also reported that Mr. Nutter had commenced erecting a Brick Kiln without giving the necessary notice.*” The Clerk was directed to request Mr. Nutter to send in a notice and Plan of Kiln forthwith in accordance with the Bye Laws.” At the same meeting, “*A plan of a Brick – Kiln was submitted by Mr. Morris and approved.*” On 2nd May 1864 the clerk was ordered “*call the attention of Mr. Watson to the large quantity of smoke issuing from his Brick Kiln and request that the nuisance be abated.*” This implies that there was at least more than one enterprise on the site.

On 2nd April 1866 “*The Building Committee reported that they had sanctioned a Plan of a Cottage in the Brickyards submitted by Mr. T. Godfrey.*” On 7th May 1866 the Board “*Ordered that the Clerk do write to the occupiers of the Brickyards Messrs. Godfrey and Mr. Norris and call their attention to the impropriety of allowing Boys to work in their Yards on a Sunday and request that such a practice may be discontinued otherwise proceedings will be taken in the matter. Also to call the attention of the Police thereto and to the number of Boys assembling near the Brickyards on Sunday.*” The remainder of the year is quiet.

“*A plan of a Brick – Kiln was submitted by Messrs. Godfrey and approved*” on 4th March 1867.

The Minutes for the years 1869 – 1879 record that on 1st August 1870 “*Also a Plan of Stable in the brickyard by Mr. Smith on behalf of Messrs. Godfrey and approved.*” The preceding entry is approval for stabling at Blackdown Hill and linked in the records for joint approval. Activity on the site is not limited to stables as on 7th November 1870 “*A plan of a Shed in the Brickyards was submitted by Mr. G.F. Smith on behalf of Messrs. Godfrey and approved.*”

On 6th October 1873 “*Mr. J. Mason submitted a Plan of a Cottage in the Brickyard which was approved.*” An assumption is made that business is expanding with an entry for 2nd March 1874 “*A Plan of Brick Kilns was submitted by Messrs. Godfrey and approved.*” Clearly production does not come without its problems: “*Complaints having been made of large volumes of Smoke issuing from the Chimney erected by Mr. Mason in his Brickyard.*”

“*Ordered that Mr. Mason be cautioned, and if the Nuisance is not abated proceedings to be taken against him.*” The follow up to this is a letter dated 20th September 1875 which stated that he was still making improvements at his Brick Works and on same being completed a Plan of the Whole would be submitted to the Board.

Apart from the minutiae of the site developing the Board were asked on 3rd January 1876 to consider this “*A letter dated 1st January 1876 from Miss E. Warner, 18 Warwick Street, requesting permission of the Board to boil offal in the Brickyards – which was not granted the Furnace being too near the Dwelling houses in the Neighbourhood.*” The boiling of tripe, offal at that time, was classed in law as an Offensive Trade and may still be.



In 5th March 1877 Mr. J. Mason submitted a plan for a Hoffmann Patent Brick – Kiln. The Board “Resolved that the Chairman The Revd. N. Milne, Dr. Horsfall, Booth Mason and Col. Woodcock be appointed a Deputation to wait upon H.C. Wise Esq. with reference to the Brick Kiln now being erected by Mr. Mason in the Brickyards it being the opinion of the Board that such a Building would be injurious to the Health of the Inhabitants and detrimental to the value of property in the neighbourhood.”

Events move on as on 19th March 1877 it was reported to the Board that “The Deputation appointed at the last Meeting to wait upon Mr. H. G. Wise respecting the New Brick – Kiln now being erected by Mr. Thomas Mason in the Brickyard reported that they had an interview with Mr. Wise on the 14th Instant and was informed by him that he could do nothing to assist the Board and that Mr. Mason had commenced building the Kiln without his knowledge or consent.”

The Board “Resolved that the Plan of the Brick Kiln submitted by Mr. Mason at the last meeting be not sanctioned by the Board the same not being in conformity with the Bye Laws. Ordered that proceedings be taken against Mr. Mason for commencing to build before giving Notice and depositing Plans with the Board in accordance with the Bye Laws.”

Undaunted on 2nd April 1877 “an amended Plan of one of Hoffmanns Patent Brick Kilns was submitted by Mr. Thomas Mason which was unanimously disapproved of.” There appears to be no further action recorded as noted by Elaine.

However, all is not done with Mr. Mason as on 6th January 1879 the Board received the following “The Surveyor reported Mr. Thos. Mason for fixing a Steam Whistle at his works in the Brickyard without sanction of the Board. “Ordered that Mr. Mason be called upon to discontinue the use of the Steam Whistle forthwith.”

Mr. Mason was present at this Meeting and promised to discontinue the use of the whistle at once. A similar transgression is reported to the Board on 17th July 1879 for a Mr. Mills using a Steam Whistle in his brickyard. He is not present to offer any undertaking to cease the use forthwith. Mr. Mason is still active as on 3rd May 1880 “A plan of a cottage and proposed enlargement of Brick Kilns in T. Mason & Co. Brickyard, was submitted by Mr. Foster and approved, subject to the same being put on drawing paper.”

The penultimate entry recorded by Elaine is from the Board’s Minutes of 3rd May 1880 when the Surveyor reported “that Thomas Mason & Co. had commenced to erect a Cottage in their Brickyard without first giving Notice and submitting a Plan for the approval of the Board. Mr. Mason to be Summonsed.” The last entry is for 7th June 1880 when “An amended Plan of Cottage and alterations to Brick Kilns were submitted by Mr. Foster and approved.”

There may be subsequent entries prompting the need for further research in the Record Office archives, as does the relationship between the various names recurring in the Minutes. What is clear is that the expansion of brick making develops from a simple single “intermittent” kiln on to embrace developing technology in the form a Hoffmann Continuous Kiln. The latter was patented in 1858, offering the ability to produce a greater volume of bricks than an intermittent kiln, using far less fuel.

I would like to conclude by again expressing thanks that I was the beneficiary of Elaine’s research. When she was alive, she always told me that she would leave me some “homework”. This she has clearly done.

Peter Coulls.

“AND YOUR NEEDLEWORK TASK FOR THIS WEEK, GIRLS, IS.....”



**Annie’s sampler,
made in 1890.**

Annie Elizabeth Gibbs was born in 1880. She was the fifth of six children

She married William Harrison, a carpenter, in 1900.

They lived in Okeford, on the Rugby Road in New Cubbington, and had two daughters Mabel and Gladys.

They later moved to Tachbrook Street in Leamington.

Annie died in 1932.

Lillington Local History Society Website



The website address is: www.lillingtonhistory.org

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.