

“Cliffe Place”, Station Road

OS Grid ref: TR 3555

4524



View from Station Road 2016



View from the south-east 2016 just prior to demolition

Generally regarded as being just one house, research has revealed that four, or possibly five, houses were constructed next to the overgrown pond at the bottom of the ‘dip’ on Station Road.

The earliest map that we have of the area, dated 1769, shows open farmland but the 1801 Ordnance Survey map does show an unlabelled building. In 1785 the property (land and/or buildings) was sold by John EDGERLEY, a mariner of Dover, to Edward LADD. At this time there is a record of a John EDGERLEY born in Dover in 1750 and who died there in 1789.

Edward LADD was a Dover cordwainer but seems to have dabbled in more than shoes and property: in an advertisement of 1782 he is clearly part of the process of selling off the vessel 'True Briton' which was lying at anchor in Dover and being put up for auction. This was quite possibly the East India Company ship 'True Briton', 499 tons, which sailed between England and India and China between about 1760 and 1782; after 1782 another 'True Briton' is listed, clearly another ship as it had a tonnage of 1198 tons, which is more in keeping with the size of ship being used at the time.

On 19 October 1802 LADD sold the property consisting of 40 perches of land (a perch is about 25 square metres) to William LUDDINGTON, a baker of Dover for £88 10s. If not at this time, then later in life these two men knew each other as both attended a meeting of the Freemen of Dover in 1828 which was chaired by LUDDINGTON himself. This buying and selling of village property by non-residents is quite common in St Margaret's and the properties were often let to provide the owners with an income. LUDDINGTON did not hang onto the property for very long, however, for on the 15 July 1802 he sold it to a Dover shipwright called Richard White WELLARD for the handsome sum of £105, giving LUDDINGTON a healthy profit for such a short time. Richard White WELLARD was born and baptised in Dover in 1768 to Thomas and Judith WELLARD; he married Ann Smith, also at St Mary's in Dover, in 1792. He appears to have still been living in Dover in 1798 when an R W WELLARD, at Pier Liberty Dover, was assessed at 4 shillings for land tax.

The following year, on 23 April, 1803, WELLARD took out a mortgage borrowing £90 from Robert MINTER, a yeoman of North Elham, at the rate of 5% p.a. By this date, WELLARD had moved into St Margaret's at Cliffe but was no longer a shipwright, having become a Customs Officer. WELLARD took out a further mortgage on 22 September 1809, this time for £110. We know that by the following year he had taken down the 'old barn' and constructed a new barn and stable, and a further mortgage is taken out on 22 September 1810 bringing the total borrowed to £280 at 5% p.a., all from Robert MINTER.

Finally, on 31 January 1811, WELLARD advertised "*The land at Mill Bottom*" for sale by auction at The Hoop and Punchbowl at St Margaret's:

"For sale by auction: freehold dwellinghouse, new barn stable and 8 acres of arable land in four pieces (be there more or less) and now in the occupation of Mr Richard White WELLARD, the proprietor, at Mill Bottom in the said parish. "

On 6-7 May 1811, the property changed hands for £490 going to Samuel REYNOLDS, victualler, of Dover (at some time he was also keeper of the canteen at Dover Castle and also may have been the Tea Dealer at 175 Snargate Street). Over the previous ten years WELLARD had paid all the interest on the loans he had taken out but not the capital so, at this time, £280 was repaid to Robert MINTER with WELLARD retaining the balance of £210.

During his ownership of the property at Mill Bottom, Richard White WELLARD had continued in his role as a riding officer at Walmer. The year after he sold the property, on 5 December 1812, he was one of a group of customs officers who seized a lug sail boat marked *Mary of Deal, John Hadley, Master*, off the coast of Deal. She was laden with a large quantity of smuggled spirits in half ankers (tubs containing a little over 4 gallons). He and his colleagues were “feloniously assaulted” in the exercise of their duty and “obstructed by a mob of persons” who rescued the boat and part of the cargo. A reward of £100 was offered for the apprehension of the offenders. Later that year, in May 1813, WELLARD spotted a suspicious vessel between Deal and Walmer Castle. “Being an enterprising officer, he ran into the sea and succeeded on getting on board where he found her cargo to consist of 194 casks of Geneva and Brandy [all of which were seized by Customs]...Great praise is due to this active officer in boarding the boat.”

Richard appears to have retired to Cornwall (or perhaps was posted there before his retirement) where he traded as a confectioner from at least 1836 until he died in February 1849 at Flushing near Falmouth.

Samuel REYNOLDS, who had bought the property in 1811, sold it on to Elias HARRIS, a Sergeant-Major in His Majesty's 95th (Rifle) Regiment of Foot for £600. The transaction took place 30-31 January in what was known as a lease and re-lease indenture. HARRIS didn't have the wherewithal to buy the property outright and actually took out a mortgage on 1st February 1815 of £400 from the same Samuel REYNOLDS at 3-1/2% p.a.

Elias HARRIS appears to have made his investment during leave from the army as we know that he was a ‘Waterloo Man’, this means to say that he fought at either Ligny, Quatre Bras or Waterloo in June 1815. The Waterloo Medal was awarded to every man who had served whatever his capacity and even if it had been his only battle as a raw recruit. It was not a popular medal as it disregarded all those who had fought long and hard in the Peninsular War. HARRIS would also have also received an extra award of two years' service and pay for pension purposes.



L: *The Waterloo Medal*

On 28 December 1818 HARRIS made his will. In it he named Richard HARRIS, his brother, and Philip BALL, as his executors and he left his St Margaret's Bay property and all other personal estate to them on trust (although, as it turned out, Richard HARRIS later relinquished his powers as executor and trustee).

At this time, Elias was a butcher in Rosemary Lane, The Minories, London, Richard was a salesman of New Road in Middlesex (presumably the same area, and Philip BALL was a baker. (Philip BALL may have been related by marriage as Elias' daughter was a widow by the name of Ann BALL – so Philip BALL may have been his daughter's father-in-law). HARRIS' estate, after expenses was first to be given to his father Robert, a yeoman of Nottingham; if he had died, then £30 was to be paid to his [Robert's] widow. (This may have been a second marriage as Elias does not say *his*

mother). His sister Ann BALL, widow, was to receive £10. Marie Louise PRINGAL, with whom he was living, was to be paid £30 *on her leaving England* with her child and child/children with whom she was pregnant; the children were to receive £30 plus interest on attaining twenty-one years of age. The fact that the will stipulates that Marie Louise was to receive a payment if she *left England* suggests that she may not have been English and, perhaps, would have wanted to return to her family after Elias' death.

The entrusted funds were also to be used to educate his son, William, and to pay for his apprenticeship; at twenty-one years of age William would receive half of the remaining funds, and the balance was to be paid to him within two years at the discretion of the executors and trustees.

A map from about this time clearly shows two buildings on the plot but no name for the property. We also know that Elias HARRIS was yet another landlord rather than tenant as at this time the property was 'in the occupation of' Richard MUGGERIDGE. HARRIS and MUGGERIDGE may well have known each other before MUGGERIDGE became his tenant as MUGGERIDGE was also a Waterloo Man having served as a private with the Royal Wagon Train. The Royal Wagon Train was the first uniformed transport corps and was heavily

involved in the Peninsular War moving up supplies and carrying the wounded; at Waterloo they had the task of removing over 4000 dead from the battlefield. Admittedly, thousands of men served in these campaigns but MUGGERIDGE also became a master butcher in his home town of Dover with premises on Snargate Street and Commercial Quay – surely not a coincidence that he and HARRIS were both butchers? Incidentally, MUGGERIDGE's second son, William, died by being hanged by accident by a horse halter!

Elias HARRIS died 10 February 1821 leaving his estate to be wound up by his executors and trustees. As HARRIS had not paid back the loan obtained from Samuel REYNOLDS, REYNOLDS took back possession of the property and put it up for auction at The Hoop and Punchbowl in St Margaret's. On 26-27 July, Stephen FISHER won the bid for £450 allowing settlement of the £400 owed to Samuel REYNOLDS.

Stephen FISHER was a purser in the Royal Navy. It seems that he also bought an additional, adjacent parcel of land 28-29 June 1822 for £12 18s 9d (£12.94) called Pond Piece/Mereway Shot.

In 1823 the Land Tax records tell us that Stephen FISHER was still the owner (he was charged 1/= land tax against a property valuation of £1) and that the occupier was John DAY. However, in 1827 FISHER was charged 4/= for house and land occupied by himself and "others" suggesting that the 1823 assessment may be for just one of the houses at Cliffe Place.

On the 15 June 1827 Stephen FISHER made his will in which he named his wife, Sarah, and children – Stephen, William and Sarah Ann. Stephen died just four years later, on the 19 February 1831, whilst on active service on board HMS Southampton at Trincomalee, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). At the time Trincomalee was an extremely important British-held port in the Indian Ocean. *HMS Southampton* was launched in 1820; she was a 60-gun third rate sailing frigate. In the early 1830s she made a voyage to Singapore via India and Ceylon. Having sailed from Madras on 12 February 1831, Stephen died a week later at Trincomalee.

Left: HMS Winchester (similar to HMS Southampton)



Stephen FISHER's widow, Sarah, continued to live at Mill Bottom for some years after his death. In 1832, the McFie transcription of the Court of Reach Manor rolls describes the property as:

*“Stephen FISHER messuage and barn now four_messuages stable yard garden
½ acre formerly occupied by John WRAIGHT and Richard Hopper DAY now by
James TEMPLE”*

This is the first time that we have a mention of *four* houses on the site. It also tells us other people had been tenants.

In 1836 an Act of Parliament was passed for the Commutation of Tithes; this involved surveying and mapping land to calculate how much money would be paid in taxes to the church rather than the previous system of tithes, a tenth of the produce of the land. In about 1840 the tithe map for St Margaret's was drawn up. It shows two plots on this site, 168a and 168b, both of 24 perches, occupied by Sarah FISHER and Mary MARSH. Each plot is shown to be a house and garden. It does not show Sarah FISHER as the owner for, after the death of her husband, Stephen, management of the property passed to the executors of James TEMPLE, a well-known local family who owned land and ran private schools in the village.

Local records suggest that Mary MARSH was the widow of George MARSH, the purser of *HMS Challenger*, who died at Madras on 31 December 1829 aged 37. It is interesting to note that one of the witnesses to his will, drawn up in 1825, was Stephen FISHER! George MARSH would have been the purser on *HMS Challenger* when under the command of Captain (later Admiral) Charles Howe Fremantle who claimed possession of the whole west coast of Australia in the name of His Britannic Majesty on the 2nd of May 1829.

The first full census of population was carried out in 1841. The 1841 census rarely tells us the name of a house so it can be difficult to place people exactly and we often have to draw conclusions by referring to other documentation. It would appear, however, that Sarah FISHER was still living there, now aged 40 or thereabouts (ages were rounded to the nearest 5 years for adults in this census), along with Mary THOMSON 50, James THOMSON 20 and Mary THOMSON 15. The THOMPSONs and Sarah were probably living in different cottages on the plot but we cannot tell this from the 1841 census. Sarah FISHER is described as 'independent', i.e. having her own income, and, as we know, the property was being managed on the family's behalf by her late husband's executors. If the

THOMPSONs were Sarah's tenants their rent would have formed part or all of her income.

On 7 June 1843, it seems that the executors agreed to sell the property to Sarah's son, William Hay FISHER. At this time the abstract describes the property as having *three* cottages. On 25 November 1846 William mortgaged the property, borrowing £350 at 4-1/2% P.A. from Daniel COX. At this time there were four tenants listed: as there were three cottages it may be that William FISHER was effectively 'sub-letting' to three tenants: Henry WELLARD, Benjamin WOODCOCK and Robert BIRCH.

In 1851 William FISHER was still the owner (although Mill Bottom is still mortgaged to Daniel COX) and the 1851 census gives us three lists of occupants suggesting that there were, indeed, three cottages on the plot. The three households consisted of :

- Mary DILNOT, a widow aged 63; Bertha COLEMAN, her niece, aged 8; and Esther MARSH, 17, their servant
- Henry TERRY, a farm labourer aged 38; his wife, Sarah, 26; and their children Henry (17), Thomas (9), John (6), and Esther (2)
- Stephen COLLARD, a farm labourer (29); his wife, Mary (26); their children Ann (4), John (2), and Maria (1)



William FISHER was clearly yet another absentee landlord as, in April 1851, he was living and working at Potters Bar where he was in charge (or maybe just a clerk!) at the newly opened Potters Bar station on the Great Northern Railway. His aunt, Judith, was living with him as his housekeeper and also listed was his cousin, Lydia RANDEL, to whom he would be married shortly after the date of the census, on 1st June 1851 at St. John's Church, Potters Bar. Sadly, it was to be a short marriage for them; William died in July 1854 and as he had not paid off the capital sum on the mortgage the property reverted to Daniel COX.

Left: Potters Bar Railway Station

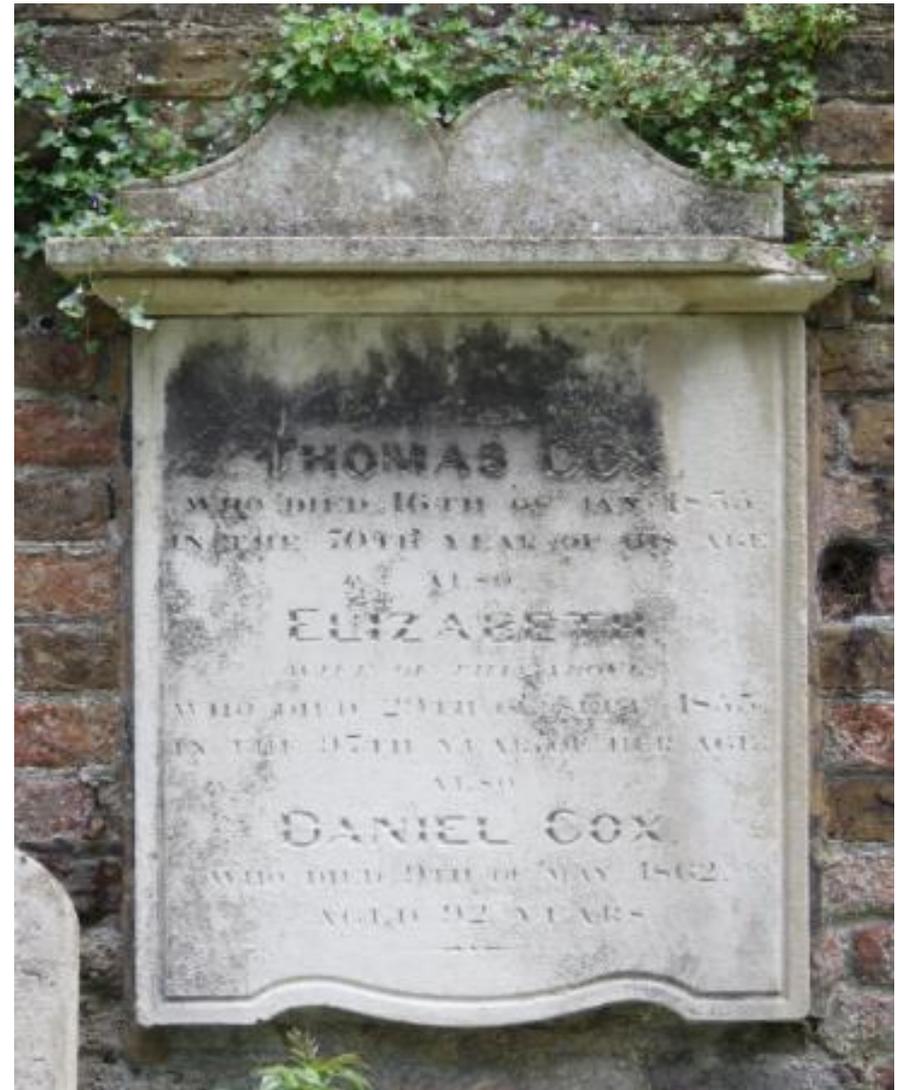
At the time of William's death, the Reach Manor records tell us that there were *four* cottages at Mill Bottom, as well as a stable yard and gardens. However, there seem to have been only three tenants – Messrs. BAKER, MITCHELL and FILE.

Daniel COX owned Mill Bottom, or Cliffe Place as it was also then interchangeably known, until his death in 1862. Daniel COX was a retired mariner and man of independent means since at least 1841 when he was living in Middle Street, Deal. In 1861 Daniel COX is listed as a bachelor living with a servant, still in Middle Street. His occupation is stated as 'fundholder'. He died on 9th May 1862 aged 92 and is buried at St George's, Deal; he left an estate '*not exceeding £5000.*'

Memorial stone at St George's, Deal

"Sacred to the Memory of Thomas Cox Who Died 16th January 1835 In The 70th Year of His Age. Also Elizabeth Wife of The Above Who Died 29th Sept. 1853 In The 97th Year of Her Age Also Daniel Cox Who Died 9th of May 1862 Aged 92 Years"

In September 1862 Sarah Ann HARDING bought the "three cottages at Cliffe Place" at an auction held at The Walmer Castle Inn, Deal. The cottages may well have been untenanted at this time for the 1861 census shows them to be uninhabited. Sarah paid £350. It is surely not a coincidence that her husband to be, John James Horatio Septimus SPARROW, an alumnus of Clare College, Cambridge, had recently been appointed to St. Peter's Church, Westcliffe. According to a local guide to the church he was vicar from 1866 until 1871. He later styled himself Septimus PENNINGTON (a family name) and was for many years the well-respected Rector of St Clement Danes in London until his death in 1910.





L: Rev. Septimus PENNINGTON

Even by Victorian standards, Sarah and Septimus believed in remarkable names. They had nine children with the cumbersome epithets of Georgina Louisa Susannah Horatia Sarah Harding SPARROW, Adam Edward Haslewood Pennington SPARROW, Archibald Langdon Sparrow PENNINGTON, Septimus Adolphus Benjamin Carter Cullen PENNINGTON, Charles George Trenchard Sale Sparrow PENNINGTON, Cuthbert Bertrum Thomas Sparrow PENNINGTON, Emma Katherine Knighton Seymour Elizabeth Carter PENNINGTON, Nona Augusta Lizzie Julia Welldon Pennington PENNINGTON (yes, really!), and Mary Mabel Decima Howe Ada Muncaster PENNINGTON!!

Sarah PENNINGTON née HARDING was to hold title to the property longer than any other owner in its history – some 49 years, in fact - and was thus landlord to many tenants. In 1864 she advertised for tenants in the Dover Express: “St Margaret’s at Cliffe. To be let: a convenient residence, with garden &c. at Mill Bottom in this parish.”

The 1871 Ordnance Survey map (published 1876) now shows this property labelled as “Cliffe Place” for the first time. The 1871 census suggests that there were indeed four cottages here by this time as four households are recorded at ‘Cliffe Place’.

- Charles HOPPER (57), blacksmith, and his wife Sarah. They also had boarders: Catherine BARNES (2), Alfred BARNES (1), Edith WEBB (8), Eliza WEBB (7), and a general servant Mary SUTTON (18). Two ‘visitors’ are also recorded: Frederick MATTHEWS (12) and Caroline WEBB (10). It is possible that the HOPPERS were supplementing their income by taking in workhouse children. After 1870, there were supposed to be no more than two children boarding and not above the age of 10 – maybe this why the two eldest children are listed as ‘visitors’. The WEBB children came from Dover whereas the BARNES children were born in London; it was not uncommon for London workhouses to board out children to more rural areas. It was also common for illegitimate children to be ‘farmed out’.
- William STONER (35) police officer and his wife, Martha (29) and their daughter, Grace, aged 5 months.

- Charles UPTON (35), carpenter, and his wife, Susannah (37) and their children Fanny (9), Lucy (8), Anne (7), and Julia (4).
- William WRAIGHT (55), carter and labourer and his wife Sarah (43) and their children Frances (10), James (8), and William (3)

Only two households are recorded on the 1881 census. At this time the HOPPERS were still taking in boarders. Five children are listed, all of whom were born in Middlesex: Spencer STANDSFIELD (7), Ernest F BAKER (7), Ruth DAVIS (3), Sydney H BAKER (2), and Horace T BAKER aged 3 months. Lily CRAMTON (17) is listed as a 'visitor' but may have been working for the HOPPERS.

The second household, recorded as Mill Bottom Cottage, consisted of Charles Y DIXON (49), agricultural labourer, and his wife, Anne (46) and their children, Charles (21), Samuel (14), Ellen (11), Maria (7), and Alice (4).

At Cliffe Place in 1891 we have four households listed, none of whom we have met before.

- John BOWLES (54), farm labourer, and his wife, Sarah Ann (34), their daughter, Lily BOWLES(9), and a domestic servant, Ellen MAJOR
- Parthenia POWELL (71), a widow living on her own means, together with her daughter, Martha (36), and her son, Arthur (27), also living on his own means. They also have a domestic servant, Emma HEAGREN.
- John MUMMERY (30), agricultural labourer, and his wife, Emma (27) and their children, Gertrude (9), Henry (6), Robert (4), Emma (2), and John aged three months. They also have a lodger, John LAURENCE (55), who is also an agricultural labourer.
- Charles REDWELL (27), shepherd, and his wife, Sarah, 26.

In 1898 a village directory tells us that PC STROOD was living at Cliffe Place, Mill Bottom, by this time but whether he had taken up the tenancy of one of the cottages or was lodging at one of them we cannot tell.

In 1899 James WILLIAMS, a coachman, was living at Mill Bottom. He was called upon to give corroborating evidence at court in the matter of an altercation that had broken out between Murray WATERER, Howard, SPANTON, W CLARINGBOULD, and Edward AKHURST.

In 1901 the census records that numbers 1 and 2 Cliffe 'Villas' were unoccupied (as was the "laundry" included with this record), but that Cliffe Place, 2 Cliffe Place and 3 Cliffe Place were tenanted. This is confusing as this seems to suggest that there were now *five* premises! It may be that one property was shared but was recorded by the enumerator as two separate households in separate accommodation.

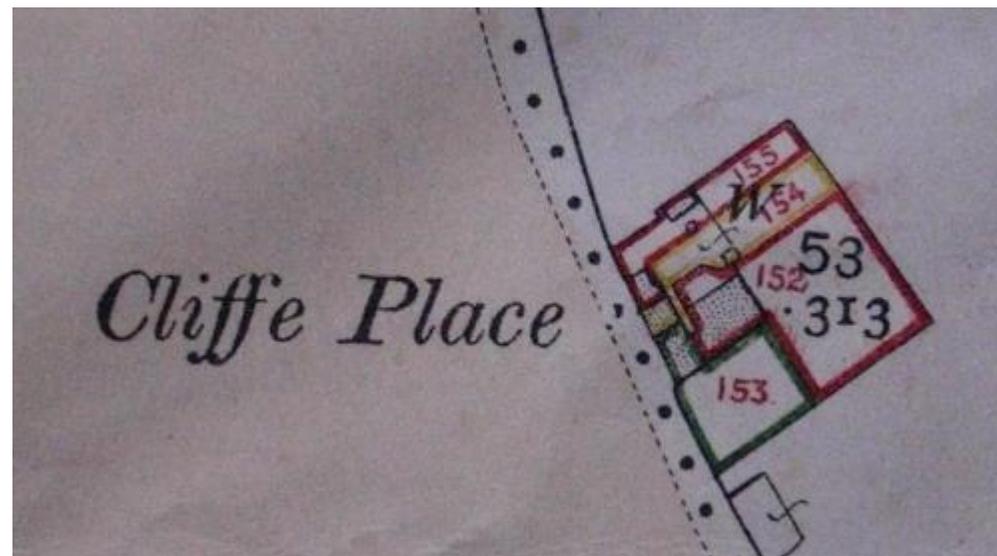
- Cliffe Place was inhabited by James BARTHOLOMEW (43 and living on his own means) and Isabel (30), his wife, and their three children, Cyril M F (10), Guy J P (2) and Vyvienne G (7). They also had a domestic servant called Emma GRIMSHAW (19)
- At 2 Cliffe Place was William H SCOATES (72, unmarried) who was in receipt of parish relief
- At 3 Cliffe Place were Spencer O BAUGH (38), a house painter and Fanny E (40), his wife.



*Frith postcard 1903/1904
Cliffe Place is at centre-right*

The maps of the early twentieth century give us a clearer view of the buildings on the plot. Although a building is shown it is not labelled on the 1902 1" map but the later 1908 map shows an L-shaped building or group of buildings, labelled Cliffe Place, together with an outhouse and well.

In 1910 a national land valuation survey was carried out to enable the levy and collection of duty based on any increased value of the land as a result of public money spent on communal infrastructure. The maps and field-books produced during this survey can often provide a good insight into the type of property and whether it was connected to running water, had electric light, heating, toilet etc. The land valuation map for this parish clearly shows four separate lots at this address. Further research is required to see if any more information exists from this valuation relating to Cliffe Place.



Extract from the map of the 1910 land evaluation survey showing four plots at Cliffe Place.

Also in 1910 there was a torrential storm which may have left the inhabitants of Cliffe Place feeling a little damp. “The Storm in St Margaret’s” hit the village causing the flooding of ponds, roads and cellars, and a hayrick blew down burying three cows, one of which suffocated. “At Mill Bottom water crossed the road.”

The last census that we have is that of 1911:

- At 1 Cliffe Place Cottages there was the HOLMAN family: Arthur Henry HOLMAN (51, a house painter and builder and his wife, Emily (57), and their children Margaret (15), Jack (13), and Thomas (7).
- At 2 Cliffe Place Cottages were Percy John LAWRENCE (22), a worker on the golf links, and his wife Winifred Elsie LAWRENCE,

together with their son Richard YOUNG aged 2. It may be that Richard was Winifred's son by a former marriage; the LAWRENCES had only been married a year at the time of the census. Percy LAWRENCE may well have been employed by St Margaret's Golf Club, the course of which would have been visible across the road from Cliffe Place.

- The EDMONDS lived at 2 Cliffe Place. Alfred EDMOND (38) was a baker. His wife, Kate (40 and who was interestingly born in Gibraltar), and the children were Ada (11), Louisa (8) and Edward (4).
- Number 1 Cliffe Place was unoccupied at the time of the census. In view of information which later comes to light it may be that this fourth cottage was already in some state of decay and therefore not rented out.

Tenancies seem to have been quite fluid for we also hear of two more people, hitherto not recorded, associated with Cliff (*sic*) Place during 1911 through two newspaper cuttings:

“Situations wanted: Work wanted, look after furnished house or good family's washing_S. c.o.WRAIGHT, Cliff Place, St Margaret's near Dover”.

“Respectable widow seeks washing or char-ing in St Margaret's.
Mrs SHARP, Mill Bottom, St Margaret's, near Dover.”

Sarah PENNINGTON was a widow by 1911 and after nearly a half century of ownership, she passed Cliffe Place to three of her many children by Deed of Gift. 1, 2, and 3, Cliffe Place were transferred to Emma Katherine Knighton Seymour Elizabeth Carter PENNINGTON spinster, Nona Augusta Lizzie Julia Welldon Pennington PENNINGTON spinster, and Mary Mabel Decima Howe Ada Muncaster DAVIS.

The 1910 map extract has a well clearly marked. Wells were dangerous places and, in 1913, it was thought that one village resident had succumbed to the depths of the well at Mill Bottom.

“St Margaret's well mystery: John HOLMAN, husband of Mrs HOLMAN of St Margaret's, who has been missing since the commencement of the present year, and who was by some, believed to have fallen down a well at Mill Bottom”

However, the report went on to say,:

“[He] has been traced by the Police to the ‘Caernarvon Arms’, Newbury. We understand that he has communicated with his wife.”

We don't know if the errant John HOLMAN returned to his wife and the village! Neither do we know at this time if there is any connection with the HOLMAN family of Cliffe Place.

The three PENNINGTON sisters retained Cliffe Place until 1919, continuing to rent out the cottages. Once again we hear mention of a 'laundry' although this is quite likely to have been just one woman taking in washing to provide herself with an income. However, whoever it was, they must have had a good number of customers as the following advertisement suggests:

“Situations vacant: An ironer wanted at once. Apply Cliffe Laundry, Cliffe Place, St Margaret's, Dover.”

A 1914 directory tells us that the laundress went by the name of EDMUNDS. Also listed for Cliffe Place were Mrs HOLMAN and H WRAIGHT. Mrs EDMUNDS is again listed in 1915 but no mention made of either Mrs HOLMAN or H WRAIGHT. In the 1917 directory only Edward DREW is listed for Cliffe Place.

From about 1918 one of the tenants was Thomas John (or John Thomas) WHITEMAN and his wife, Harriet. WHITEMAN was in his mid to late seventies, his wife some twenty years younger. WHITEMAN had worked as an insurance agent/moneylender for most of his life, the latest record for this coming from the 1911 census where he is shown as a registered moneylender for the County Credit Company Ltd., London. Harriet is shown as his 'amanuensis'.

In 1919 the weather again did its worst and may have been the reason for the PENNINGTON sisters to decide to sell.

“Cottages collapse: During the rough, wet weather on Friday night, the back portions of two of the four cottages at Mill Bottom, St Margaret’s, collapsed and fell outwards. One of them had no occupant and the tenant of the other, a nurse, was away at a case at the time”.

In the same edition of the Dover Express there is also a comment:

“They say that the cottages of which the backs collapsed at St Margaret’s, took the need for improvements into their own hands”

Perhaps the cottages had been poorly cared for thus resulting in their collapse?

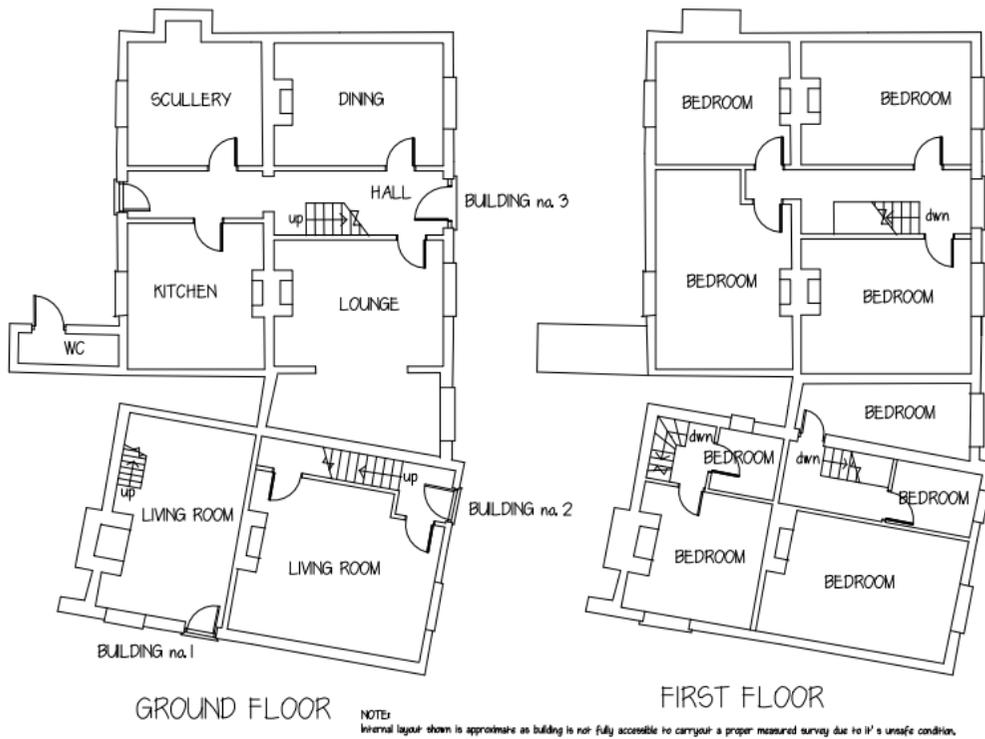
Thomas John WHITEMAN makes the news later in the same year:

“Thomas John WHITEMAN was fined 10s. for having a dog at Mill House St Margaret’s unmuzzled, on June 22nd”

Britain had been declared free of rabies since 1902 and quarantine regulations had been brought in to maintain this status. However, at the end of World War One, many returning soldiers brought back dogs that they had adopted in France. There were some localised outbreaks of rabies which were effectively contained. In May 1919, the Dover Express reported the case of rabid dog at St Margaret’s which was found and destroyed on the beach near the Bay Hotel. As a result, the Board of Agriculture imposed a muzzling order across East Kent.

On 6 October 1919 the three PENNINGTON sisters signed over ownership of 1, 2 and 3 Cliffe Place to Richard John BARWICK, a builder. The cottages must have been in real need of repair for a report by the Dover Rural District Council stated that a request had been made for a ‘closing order’ for the four cottages at Cliffe Place. One had been demolished and the three other repaired. The matter had also been referred to the Medical Officer for his report suggest that the state of the buildings was poor indeed. In 1921, on 1st September, BARWICK sold on the now three repaired cottages and ‘The Vicarage’ to Edward BARTON, Chief Petty Officer (Stoker) RN.

The properties changed hands for £650. It is not clear what property is meant by The Vicarage.



Floor plans drawn up 2016 prior to demolition showing the three cottages

HMS Danae (1937)



Edward Charles BARTON joined the Royal Navy in 1911 and began his career as a Stoker II at Chatham. Chatham (known as Pembroke II) was his 'base' when not at sea. He passed his exams for Petty Officer in 1917 and Chief Petty Officer in 1924. At the time of his marriage in 1921 and until 1923, he served on HMS Danae, a D class Light Cruiser launched in 1918. She was one of the fastest cruisers of her time capable of 29 knots.

Edward BARTON and his fiancée, Bessie GREEN bought 'the cottage' shortly before they married on 24 September 1921. Edward actually borrowed £350 at 6% from the seller, R J BARWICK in order to complete the purchase. The loan was repaid in full just three years later

Soon after their marriage it appears that Bessie's parents, Mr GREEN and his wife, Blanche, moved in with them, presumably in the largest of the three cottages (Building no. 3 on the plan). Mr and Mrs WHITEMAN continued to be tenants and were presumably living in building number 2 but all was not happy.



Bessie BARTON née GREEN with Blanche Elizabeth their first child b. 19 June 1922 (photo 21 Sept 1922)

Petty Officer BARTON (undated photo)

L-R Bessie Margaret b. 20 September 1924 and Blanche Elizabeth (photo c. 1926/7)

With a growing family and Bessie's parents living with them space was probably at a premium for the BARTON family. On 18 January 1924 the *Dover Express* reported on the Dover Petty Sessions in which Bessie BARTON attempted to bring a case against Mr J T WHITEMAN and his wife for possession of a cottage at Cliff Place because the rent was in arrears, the tenants were a nuisance to adjoining tenants and Mrs BARTON herself, and Mrs BARTON needed the cottage to house her parents. Mrs BARTON said that when her husband was away at sea Mrs WHITEMAN bullied and terrorised her, and there was a number of occasions where the shared gate had been locked, slops had been thrown into the basement, bricks, rags, bones and onions thrown on the path making passing with the perambulator impossible, and verbal threats. A window had also been taken out letting rain into the cellar. The court was adjourned as Mr WHITEMAN, aged 82, was not present and it was felt that the root cause of the dispute was the need for the BARTONS to repair the house which was in a dilapidated state.

The following month the *Dover Express* published a further report which reveals that the BARTONS had purchased a third cottage at Cliffe Place with just one bedroom but that Bessie wished her parents to move into the larger, adjoining cottage, currently let to the WHITEMANS. The alleged objectionable nature of the WHITEMANS and the desire to house her parents there were the reason for seeking the 'ejection order' from the court. The third cottage only had one bedroom and was not big enough. The court was not convinced that sufficient evidence had been brought to confirm the alleged nuisance caused by the WHITEMANS and the case was thrown out.

It looks as if the WHITEMANS did finally move out as there is a record of the death of a T J WHITEMAN aged 85 at Eastry in 1927.

*Back row L and R: Joseph and Blanche GREEN
Centre: Bessie BARTON née GREEN
Front: Blanche and Bessie BARTON
(Undated photo c.mid 1920s)*





In 1927 the grandparents, Joseph GREEN and Blanche Elizabeth GREEN née OLIVER, were still living at Cliffe Place, presumably in the second largest cottage adjoining the BARTON family. Another pair of hands was probably welcomed as, in 1929, Edward and Bessie had their third daughter, Lucy.

Blanche was born 5 Aug 1864, in Kensington, London and married Joseph GREEN 16 June 1890. In 1891 and 1901 Joseph's father, Eli, was coachman/groom at Oxney Court to William Banks JP in 1891 and Major Herbert BANKS, King's Royal Rifles in 1901. It appears that Joseph followed in his father's footsteps and worked at Oxney Court as a coachman.

Blanche Elizabeth GREEN née OLIVER c. 1884



*Joseph GREEN snr. gardening at Cliffe Place.
(Late 1920s? The telegraph pole and outbuilding
match what was there at the time)*



Cliffe Place residents must have witnessed a little excitement in April 1931. The Dover Express reported that a telephone pole had been knocked down by an MG driven by a Mr CARVER who had a miraculous escape.

“The Dover Post Office engineering department are shown at work replacing the telegraph pole cut down in the accident at St Margaret’s. They erected the new pole and replaced the 28 wires that were broken in the course of the day. With so many Continental wires to look after, the Engineering Department has a busy time, and, but for their repair lorry, would have difficulty in carrying out the work, which extends along a considerable stretch of the coast.”

Cliffe Place remained in the hands of the Barton family together with The Anchorage, Collingwood Road, until the death of the last family member in 2012.

Cliffe Place was sold in 2014 and a survey carried out and published in 2015 describing the current state of buildings as dilapidated and suffering from significant water damage.

“Structurally the buildings are typically of the vernacular which was prevalent during the very early 19th century. The roofs would have been plain clay tile (likely to be Kent pegs) over-cladding set on battens nailed upon timber rafters supported on clasped purlins with collars. At present the over-cladding comprises a mixture of slates, plain clay tiles and interlocking pantiles. The ceilings were and remain lath and plaster nailed to timber joists.

The first floor comprises timber boards over timber joists with lath and plaster ceilings.

The external walls comprise 229mm thick brickwork with horsehair and lime plaster internal finish. External rendering has been added sometime later. The bricks are typical of the ‘soft burnt’ local bricks, handmade either in Deal or Dover. The mortar is lime:sand. Internal partitions are formed from timber studding with lath and plaster finishing. Some studding has brick noggin.

Fireplaces are rebuilt from brickwork as are the chimney stacks.

The foundations would typically be brick footings with or without outward corbelling. There would not be any concrete foundations to the foot of the walls. There is no evidence of underpinning.

There are basements to all the buildings and these are a storey in height.

There are no services but there is evidence of a small water tank buried in the ground which had a small diameter handlift pump to the south-west elevation. Heating, apparently was derived by the last occupant taking up the floorboards in the scullery and burning them in the kitchen on a copper stove. That was the only room which was heated. All the other rooms remained unheated and unoccupied and, thus, were never subject to drying for decades."

Overall it was considered better to demolish than expect renovation at hugely prohibitive cost. Moreover, it was thought that any attempt at refurbishment was likely to cause collapse. Planning permission was granted to the new owners to demolish the original buildings and replace with a new detached house and garage on the site.



Pinchbeck Victorian mourning brooch found at Cliffe Place.

Images on the Internet show very similar cameos: the left hand antler 'point' seems to be broken as the other images show the main point joined to the foliage on the left. We will probably never know the name of the man in the photograph.



Selection of photographs of the interior taken prior to demolition

Research and narrative by Carol Partridge ©2019

St Margaret's History Society

Using a wide range of documents and other resources all within the public domain, every attempt has been made to produce an accurate history of Cliffe Place and its owners and tenants. The conclusions drawn are my own and it is almost inevitable that subsequent or additional discoveries may change the 'story' somewhat. Should such information come to hand, please do not hesitate to contact me at the Society so that we may set the record straight.