



February 2017

Volume 7, Issue 1

Chairman's Message



When the EHS was set up seven years ago, one of our first projects was the recording of the Monumental Inscriptions in the churchyard, an activity which involved about twenty members of the Society. A rather smaller number were engaged in the 'Why is Elham Here' investigation, led by Nigel Thomas. Both projects had a successful outcome, and were, I think it is fair to say, enjoyed by those taking part (well, most of the time anyway). It would be good to get some more joint activities going, and that is one of the things that I would like to discuss at the AGM.

This year's AGM is on Friday 21st April, so plenty of time to come up with ideas. Please be there anyway, as we always try to make it a good social evening, and I am sure you will be interested to see what has been achieved in the last year.

It will also be our time to say a big thank-you to Andrée Sladden, who has decided to retire as Secretary after filling that role since we began. The success of the Society owes much to her drive and enthusiasm, and the good news is that she will still be around to offer advice and ideas.

Forthcoming Events

- 17th February Talk by John Buss "The Victorian Workhouse in East Kent" Elham Village Hall 8.00 pm.
- 17th March Talk by Andy Linklater of Canterbury Archaeological Trust about the discovery in Canterbury of the medieval computer 'The Quadrans Novus' Elham Village Hall 8.00 pm.
- 21st April The EHS AGM – 8.00 pm Elham Village Hall
- 20th May Afternoon guided visit to Brook Agricultural Museum to include a visit to the local church and its medieval wall paintings.
- ? June Charlton Park – a talk on the history of the building and a cream tea. Date to be advised.
- 21st July A guided tour of Denton Church with Derek Boughton. Details to follow.

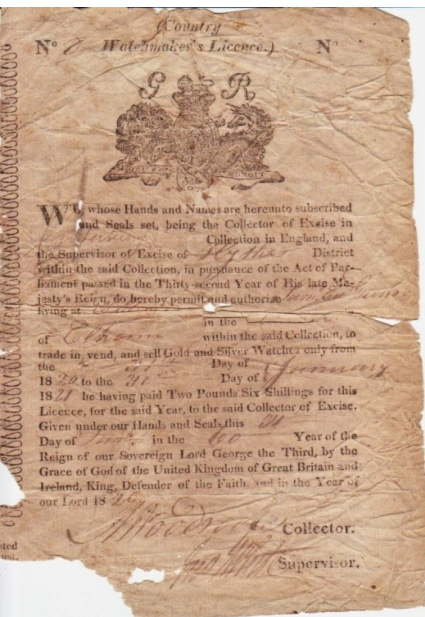
Booking arrangements:

All Friday evening talks are at the Village Hall in Elham, starting at 8.00 p.m. and places can be reserved by contacting the Secretary on 01303 840336 or emailing alsladden@btinternet.com. Members £3.00 and Non-Members £5.00.

Elham Clock and Watchmakers

When Merton College, Oxford, did major work on Elham Church in the 1290's they installed an 'orologium', one of the earliest known instances of a clock in any English church. That clock may have been an internal one, like the famous survivor at Wells Cathedral which dates to about 1390. But some of its mechanism may have been in the ancient tower clock which was replaced by the present clock in 1874. That old clock played a selection of tunes on the church bells (including 'The Bluebells of Scotland'), and it was probably replaced because there was no-one capable of maintaining it after the death of Elham's last clockmaker, Samuel Edward Dunn, in 1872.

Dunn, born in Denton in 1798, was apprenticed to James Warren in Canterbury, and set up in business in the house in the Square now known as 'Wise Follies' in 1819. He worked there for the rest of his life, and a number of clocks and watches are known, marked 'S. E. Dunn, Elham'. One of his early account books survives, showing that in the 1830's he was looking after the above mentioned Elham church clock, as well as that at Lyminge, and the turret clock at Acrise Place.



The Papillon family at Acrise Place were big customers, though Thomas Papillon's 1827/8 account of £10-4-11 was quite exceptional. It included 'A Double Bottom Gilt Hunter' at £5-0-0, as well as the frequently recurring 'Repaired coffee pot ... 6d' and 'Repaired toast rack ... 6d'. On 11 May 1832 is an entry 'Repairing Squirrel Toy ... 1-0' for Thomas Papillon junior. Miss C.Papillon's 1835 account of 8/6 was not settled until 1837, but he had many worse payers than that.

Dunn's Country Watchmaker's Licence from 1820

Dunn became Elham's first Postmaster, an office which stayed in his family for four generations, and he was also active in community affairs, being a churchwarden for many years. At the 1861 census he was the enumerator for the eastern half of the parish, an enormous task when Elham extended beyond Acrise as far as Swingfield Minnis.

After Dunn's death, the business was carried on by his daughter, Mrs Sarah Smith, and grandson, William 'Pally' Smith, until the latter's death in 1947, but they were repairers rather than makers of clocks and watches.

Samuel Edward Dunn had probably succeeded Henry Prebble in the business, though all we know of him is from the *Kentish Gazette* of 24 September 1819: 'Died, Sept. 24th at Elham, Mr Prebble, watchmaker, aged 70'. No clocks or watches are known with Prebble's name, but there are examples by Stephen Scott, who appears in the *Universal British Directory* of 1794, and died aged 74 in 1798. It is likely that Scott also lived at 'Wise Follies'. This is asserted as fact by George H. Brocklehurst in 'Elham Echoes' published in the *Kentish Express* in 1907, but Brocklehurst is an unreliable source, and gives Scott's age at death as 94.

Elham Clock and Watchmakers cont/....



Longcase clock formerly owned by his great-granddaughter, Miss Mary Smith, now in Sussex



Dunn long case clock owned by Bryan Badham



Dial of longcase clock



Dunn wall clock owned by Derek Boughton



Dial of longcase clock

A Date for your Diary

Our 7th A G M

will be held on 21st April, at 8.00 pm in Elham Village Hall

We will be looking back at the talks and visits undertaken during the last year and update you on the various projects that the team have worked on during 2016

Entrance will be free and the bar will be open

Please bring any old photos of life in Elham that you might like us to scan into the historical archive and any items of interest you might like discussed.

Renewals will be taken by our Membership Secretary - Moira Wiltshire

Don't forget we will need to receive any nominations for the Committee 14 days before the AGM ie 7th April 2017

Nominations will be for the following positions:

Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer

If you have a nomination please forward it to the Secretary:-
email: alsladden@btinternet.com or telephone 01303 840336

Snippets From Our Archive



Fowler Traction Engine 14149, Reg.No. CKO131 at Elham on the 30th July 1955. This original photograph was purchased for the EHS archive in December 2016.



George Palmer planting one of the cherry trees outside of Caister's and the old slaughter house in the High St. Elham, to celebrate the coronation of Elizabeth II in 1953. The young boy holding the tree is Martin Baker.

George Palmer Collection

Snippets From Our Archive cont/....



In 1267 Walter of Merton visited Elham and bought Parsonage Farm in North Elham, which consisted of the same forty acres which were subsequently sold to the Palmer family in 1957. More importantly, Walter acquired the advowson of the church. This gave the College (which he had founded at Morden in Surrey, but was about to move to Oxford) the right to present priests to the living and to collect the Tithes of the parish.

On the 15th May 2013 Derek Boughton, Nigel Thomas and Bryan Badham went to visit the Merton College Archives where Archivist Julian Reid showed them a selection of the records held about Elham. We hope to celebrate the 750th Anniversary of Merton College becoming patrons of the living with an exhibition and perhaps a further trip to the College.

Winter Scenes from the Archive





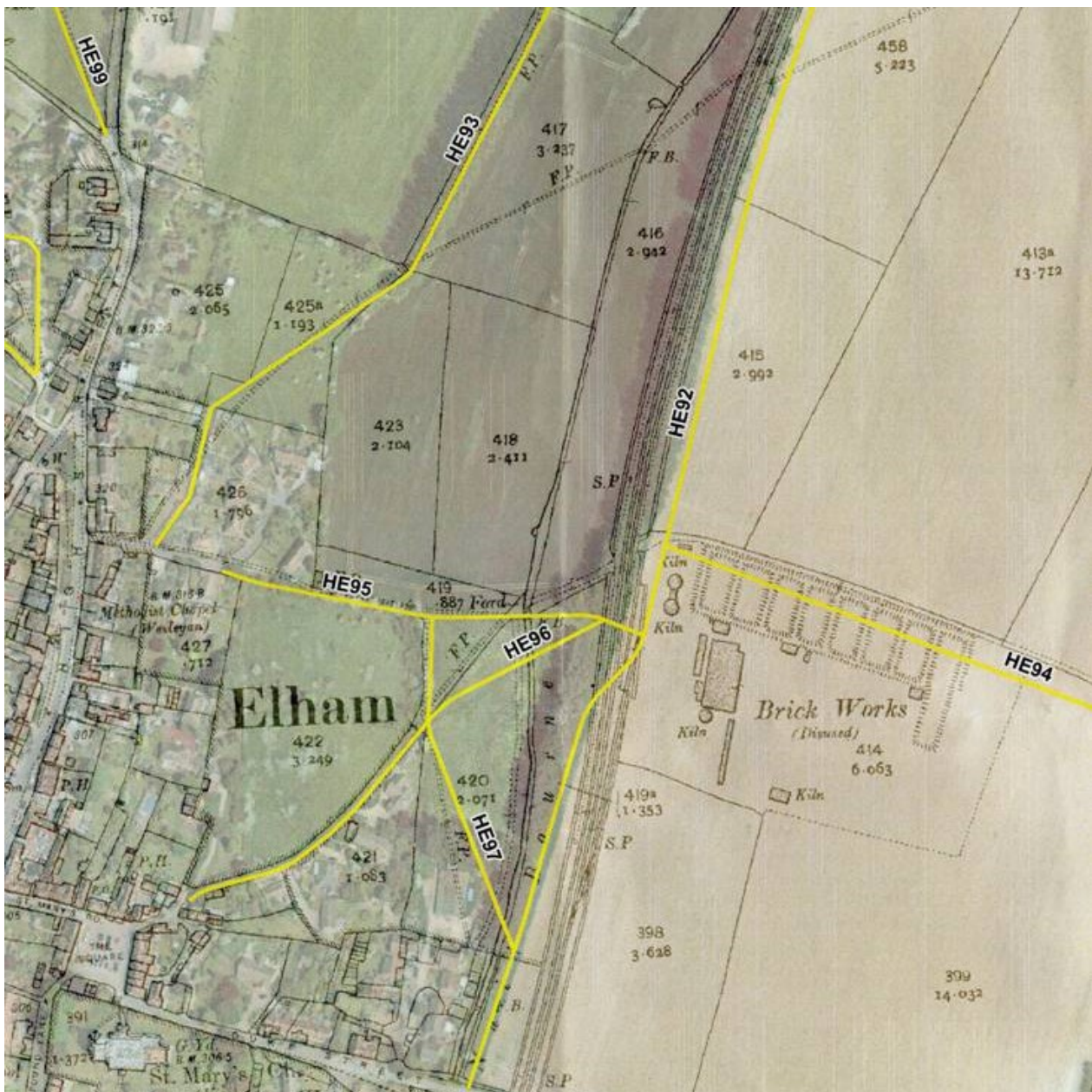
David Ratcliff collection, taken in Elham, 2013

Has The Course Of The Nailbourne Ever Been Moved?

This is a question that crops up every now and then and this might provide an answer for one case in point.

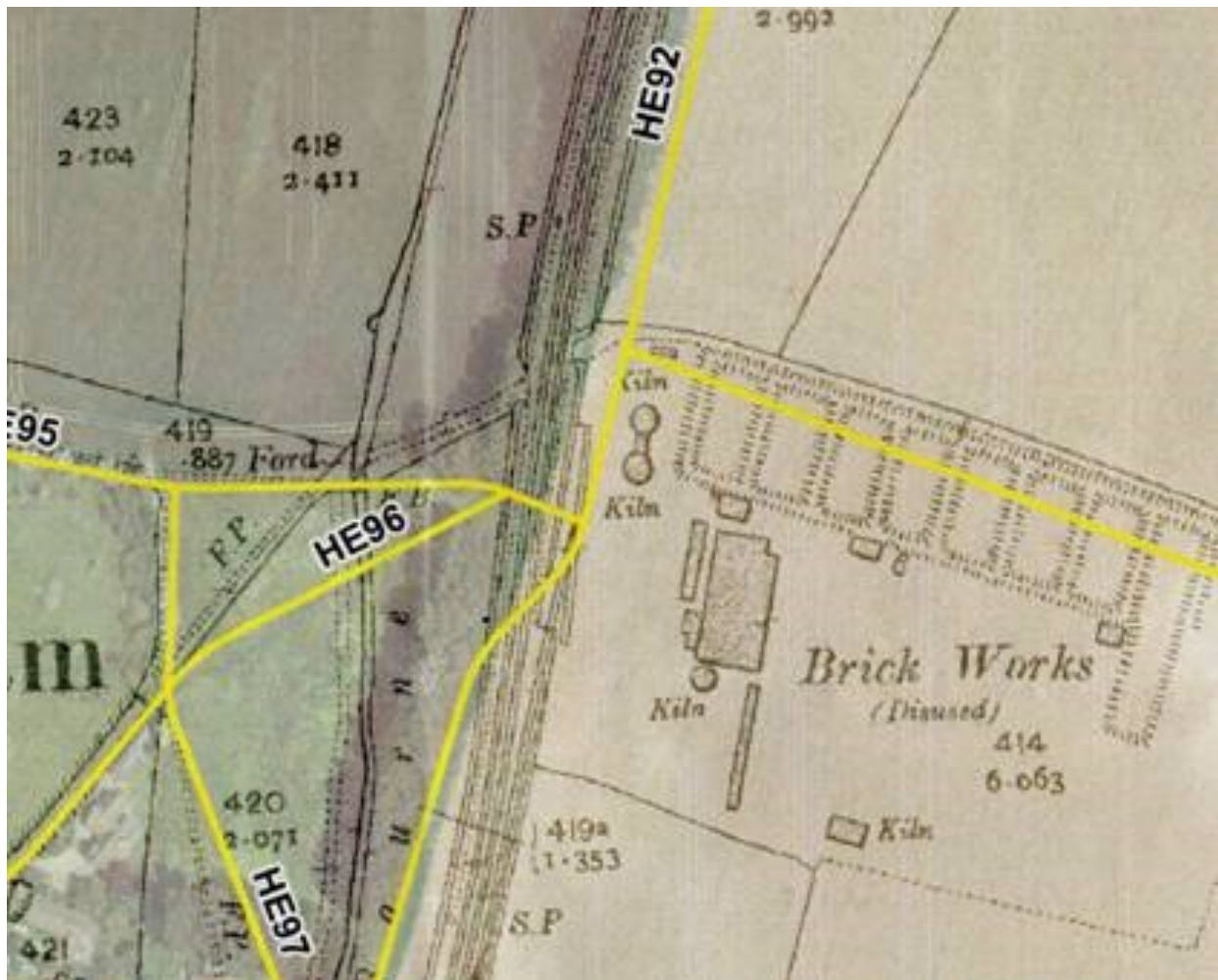
It was in the early 1950's that George Boucher, the then owner of Water Farm, straightened the course of the Nailbourne and planted the line of poplars. Some people like them, but others feel that they are aliens and divide Elham from its landscape. From the latter's point of view, the consolation is that these trees will not have a long life, unlike the ancient pollarded cricket bat willows which lined the banks of the old watercourse.

This overlay map from circa 1939 (?) shows the original position of the Nailbourne, together with the location of the railway line and the brickworks.



Has The Course Of The Nailbourne Ever Been Moved? Cont/...

Looking closely at this next image you will see that the Nailbourne originally ran through the middle of field 420 and 418, which might explain why footpath HE95 gets very wet in the area that was once a ford. We also know that springs regularly appear in field 417 during very wet conditions.



Thanks to Ed Denne for the map images and information.

East & West Sandling Camps Practice Trenches on Tolsford Hill

Recent discovery of the East & West Sandling Camps **Practice Trenches on Tolsford Hill** has now been published on the web.

The web site includes maps, photos, aerial images, locations and historic images of the newly re-discovered location of the practice trenches infilled one hundred years ago and includes collected information on **East & West Sandling Camps**.

Please take a look at www.SaltwoodKent.co.uk and follow the link to 'Discovery of Practice Trenches'

Elham Shops – part one

When we have just one shop (and please, please, please members use it), it is hard to imagine that within living memory Elham had over twenty. The watchmaker's shop in the Square is mentioned in another article, and this business continued, mainly as newsagent, tobacconist and sweetshop, until the death of William Smith in 1947. In 1908 his older brother Edward had taken the Post Office part of the business into the nextdoor house (now King Post), but before that move had taken a photo of his young daughter Mary in the shop doorway.



There is a display of some of the many postcards which Edward Smith had published from his own photographs, and which are a great resource for the EHS.



There are no other close-up photos of the shop, but it can be seen in this shot from the Coronation celebrations of 1937. The shutters are up on the shop window. These were held by long bolts inserted from the outside and secured by nuts on the inside, and the late Bill Watson (1909-2009) recalled that village boys would have great fun pulling them out while poor old 'Pally' was inside trying to fix the nuts.

2017

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Bygone Kent

The county's history magazine

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your county in every issue, you need to read



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*Keep informed about our latest projects and activities -
www.ehs.elham.co.uk and www.ehsdatabase.elham.co.uk*

Postcards

Don't forget our wonderful collection of vintage postcards are available from the Rose and Crown, The Cosy Tea Rooms or Elham Valley Stores, all in the High Street at a cost of 60p each or £4.00 for a pack of eight.



It's your Newsletter!

We've got lots of good "stuff" to tell you about in these newsletters but we hope that you, our members, will also provide contributions.

Everyone will have their own special areas of interest so, to stop us banging on about our own obsessions, send us your thoughts and photos etc. Letters to the Editor are always appreciated!

Please email me: dilyswebb@btinternet.com

Follow us on our Facebook page

We now have our own Facebook group where people (EHS members and non members) can upload pictures and make comments about Elham's history. If you are on Facebook then please take a look at:

www.facebook.com/#!/groups/317708811602063/