ELHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A Virtual Tour of Elham

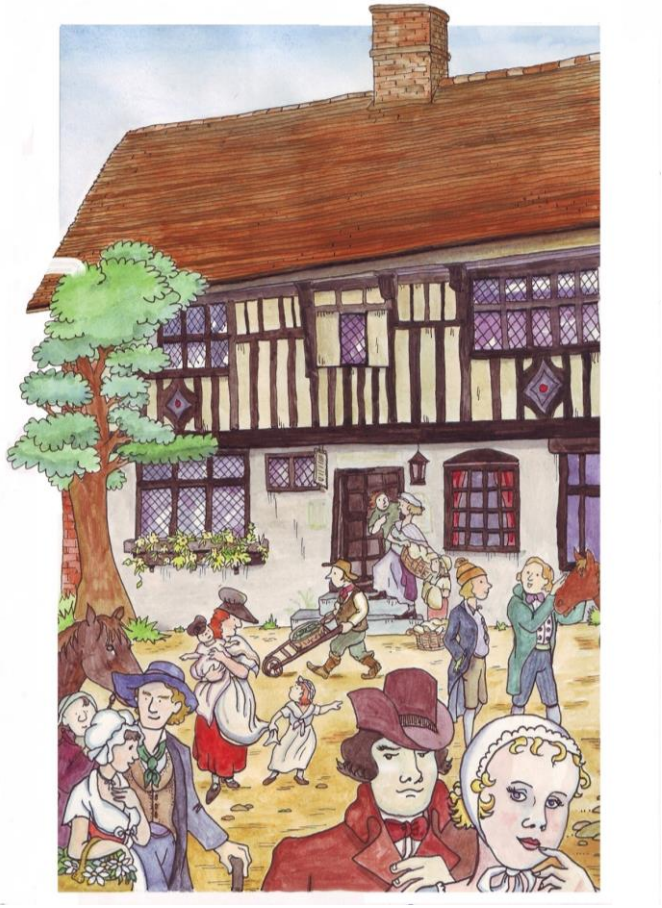


Illustration © Diana Turner

We start our tour in **The Square**, also known as Market Square, the Nether Market, and "le forum" in a title deed of 1605 on display in the King's Arms. Only **The Old Bakery** displays its timber-framing, but all the other houses are older than their frontages suggest, and this was also true of the row of five cottages which stood on the south side until 1940, a medieval row Georgianised in 1730. Had they survived, they would be very desirable today, but modern farm traffic certainly wouldn't be able to get down to Water Farm. It was the market, granted its charter in 1251, which gave the village its shape, most evident here and in the broad High Street, known as the Upper Market until the nineteenth century.

The Old Bakery was a baker's shop until the 1960s and was used in the 1955 film "Raising a Riot", starring Kenneth More. The Black Mill at Barham, sadly burnt down in 1970, was also a star of that film.

The Old School House was left to the parish in the 1723 will of Sir John Williams, Lord of the Manor, who had had it refronted some years before. It was to be home to the schoolmaster, and Sir John left various pieces of land to fund the school, and the apprenticeship fees of boys when they left. The Sir John Williams

Charity no longer owns the house, but still has some of the land, and has an annual income of about £8,000, at least half of which goes to support the village school. Grants are also given to girls and boys from the parish in further education.

King Post, at the bottom of St Mary's Road was the home of Miss Mary Smith, whose 1940 diary was the basis of the book "Harvest of Messerschmitts" by Dennis Knight, about the events of that year. Behind the modest Georgian facade is a "Wealden" type house, end on to the street, and dating from the late fifteenth century. It is now owned by the National Trust.

Wise Follies was the home and shop of watch and clockmakers from the eighteenth century until 1947, though William Smith, the last of the line, was just a jobbing watch repairer. This house was almost entirely rebuilt in 1790, and its facade is of mathematical tiles, which imitate brick.

The King's Arms is known to have been a pub, originally the **Cock**, since 1605, but probably from the time it was built in the fifteenth

century (or even before that). When the landlord, Webb Foremen, died in March 1749, he had 6,712 gallons of beer in stock. It was later owned by Rigdens of Faversham, who in 1902 added the porch, so characteristic of their pubs.

Corner Cottage, a small timber-framed dwelling cased in brick, can be no earlier than the seventeenth century, as the title deed of 1605 shows a stable on the site.

Rigdens is named from the family which lived there for over a century. There were six unmarried daughters, who ran a well-respected school there for many years. The young Audrey Hepburn also had lessons here as well as at Mrs Hubble's school at West Bank, and shared some lessons with the vicar's four daughters at the Vicarage.

Nos 2 and 3 are now one house, converted when it became the home of Mark Ealham, the Kent and England cricketer, and his wife Kirsty.

Crown House was the Crown Inn until about 1800 and was earlier known as the Red Lion. The recent renovation has revealed that it is mostly eighteenth century, but contains the upper floor jetty of a house of the fifteenth century.

Passing by King Post in St Mary's Road, we come to **The Well House,** a timber-framed house with a stucco frontage of the early eighteenth century.

Next door **The Old Bookshop** is now a house. It was two houses until the mid nineteenth century, when it became a grocer's, then a VAD hospital in 1914, the village Post Office for some years, a saddler, and then had its all too brief career as the bookshop run by Tim Parsons.

Next is the kitchen of the **Rose & Crown**, formerly its brew house. The bricks of its wall are very early. The pub itself is timber framed and of the fifteenth to the seventeenth century but most of it received a Georgian stucco frontage in 1740. You should carefully cross the road, to get a good view of the Rose & Crown. The local petty sessions met here on alternate Mondays until the early nineteenth century. Some have suggested that the fact that they met at the left end is why that was not modernised in 1740. A considerable volume of Petty Sessions records remained in the pub in 1940, when the then landlord decided to send it for salvage to help the war effort!
What we lost through that action!! It could have told us so much about the lives of the sort of people who tend not to get noticed in other records.

The **Rose & Crown Stables** have been converted into accommodation. Romantics like to think that stage coaches ran through, and changed horses here, but the Elham Valley road was never important enough for such upmarket transport, except as a rich person's plaything in the years running up to WW1, when for instance the Hotel Metropole in Folkestone ran a coach through to Canterbury.

The frontage of the **Abbot's Fireside,** with its continuous jetty, belongs to the reconstruction of 1614, which is commemorated by an inscription on the mantel which gives the hotel its name, but within is a building of about 1450. By the early seventeenth century, Elham's market was in decline, and when it was sold (heavily mortgaged) in 1671, the Smithie's Arms had been converted into cottages, and remained so until 1939, when it again became a hostelry. Various comforts were provided here for the troops in WW2.
It is worth looking at the brickwork of the gable end, with its fine but now mangled string courses, and also the carpenters' marks on the timbers.

The village shop now operates on a reduced scale, but there has been a grocer's shop here since at least 1830, when Ingram Swain met his father there on the evening of Saturday 28th August, during the Swing Riots of that year.

As late as the 1970s Mark Hogben, the then proprietor, used to boast that his was the only village store in Kent to stock Beluga caviar. Before the war, his father-in-law, Ken Hubble, said the range of his stock was exemplified when one night someone broke in and unrolled the contents of a packet of condoms over three pitchfork handles! A new angle on Fork 'Andles!

The broad High Street operated as the **Upper Market** and oral tradition has it that horse sales took place here, and that would tie in with the Merton College records. It also makes sense, as there was more room here to watch your prospective purchase being given a run than in the confines of the Market Square.

Fudge Cottage has had various uses, including housing the village fire engine, a wine merchant, and latterly the village newsagent who also made and sold home-made fudge.

Trelawney Cottage had previously been the newsagent's shop, but was probably given its name by a lady with Cornish connections, who taught at the village school in the early years of the twentieth century.
Susan Goatman, daughter of the village newsagent, captained both Kent and England at cricket. Earlier in the century, across the way, the village grocer was Lewis Hubble, and his brother Jack was Kent's wicketkeeper before Les Ames.

The next house is **Verneys**, named after Elham's last tailor. He styled himself "East Kent Tailor", and the reference was not to the area in general but to the local hunt, as riding gear, including hunting pink, was his speciality.

Frank Verney had been apprentice to his predecessor, Albert Castle, who often provided the entertainment, including conjuring tricks, at village events. His son Fred became a schoolmaster in Bath, and played cricket for Somerset out of term time. His Wisden obituary noted that he was probably the best conjurer to play first-class cricket, so he inherited the skills.
An eighteenth century account book survives from the property, though research has shown that John Mount, who kept it, actually worked in Etchinghill. It provides some fascinating insights into the life of a country tailor 250 years ago.

The building housing **The Cosy Tea Rooms** was originally Elham Service Garage, with a workshop behind and petrol pumps in front. Built in the late thirties on the site of the forge, it was designed by John Conrad, son of Joseph the novelist, and is rather more felicitous than his later Vicarage.
The forge house was probably a fine timber-framed building, and a piece of linenfold panelling saved from it serves as a screen in the church.

New Inn Cottages, as their name (and their windows) suggest was a pub, and indeed it traded as the New Inn until New Year's Day 2005. Until 1826, when it was largely rebuilt, it was The Three Tuns. In the late eighteenth century it was the favourite venue for the Annual Meeting of the Elham Friendly Society, founded in 1765. This was a big event, as the society had over seven hundred members, and several thousand pounds invested by 1800.

The Annual Meeting was always held on the last Thursday in June, apart from 1790, when it was postponed a week to avoid clashing with the General Election.

Much of what we know about the Elham Friendly Society comes from the pages of the Kentish Gazette. Their newsmen rode out from Canterbury with the printed papers, returning with copy for the next edition. The one who came through Elham rode to Hythe and on as far as Lydd. On one occasion Thomas Hodges, the village lawyer, who was Clerk to the Justices, inserted a note in the Saturday edition that the following Monday's session was cancelled because all roads were blocked by snow. He must have been confident that the newsman would get through in spite of the conditions.

In the early nineteenth century, meetings of the Vestry were held in strict rotation at the three remaining Inns, and it is from the Vestry minutes that we know when the Cock became the King's Arms and the Three Tuns re-opened as the New Inn.

The Master's House and **Poor's House** were the village workhouse and later housed the poor of several other parishes in a union formed under Gilbert's Act of 1782. It appears to have been a benevolent institution (perhaps less so in the nineteenth century). In the 1750s and 60s old ladies were given wine to ease them through their last days. Five shillings was allowed for the wake of a pauper, and this was rotated around the five pubs still in business at the time.

Loriners and **Trentham** have a frontage with the datestone 1742, again added to an earlier build. It was here that Thomas Hodges, the village lawyer, lived. He had a Negro servant, who was baptised John Kent by Thomas Thompson, Elham's pro-slavery vicar. Kent absconded in 1768, and Hodges offered a reward for his return in the Kentish Post. We don't know if Kent returned, but he does not appear again in the records.

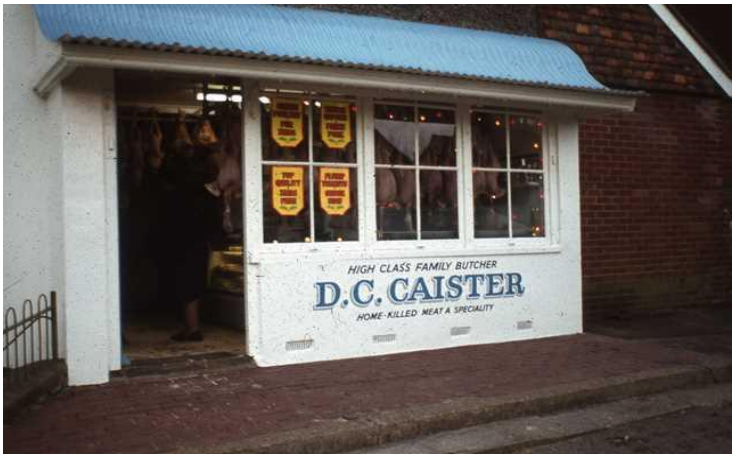
This house later became home to several generations of harness maker, hence the name Loriners, and Rope Walk House next door. At **Trentham** in the mid nineteenth century, the widow Charlotte Floyd ran a bakery. She had a young family when her husband died, and suffered a further tragedy when one of her sons drowned in the

Nailbourne (the valley's intermittent stream), as far as we know the only instance of such an accident.
These houses also have one of the village's three Sun Insurance marks. This policy was taken out by the owner, John Andrews of North Elham, whose family were distant relations of Mr & Mrs Andrews, the subjects of the striking Gainsborough portrait now in the National Gallery.

When **The Old Bakery** ceased trading in the early nineties, the butcher opposite reported that his takings went down £400 the following week. It then became an antique shop, and with two other small antique outlets and the bookshop, it looked for a while that they might help to sustain the village economy, but all have now gone. The Old Bakery later became **The Blue Vinny** restaurant, which was the subject of a Channel 4 documentary, but that too failed.

Oriel Cottage has at least two periods of timber-framed construction within.

Brogdale also has a complex history, with an eighteenth century frontage, part stucco and part brick, with fine sash windows.



It was the butcher's house for many generations, but the last butcher, Denis Caister, had it as a lock-up shop. The modern house next door, **Old Shambles**, is on the site of the slaughterhouse.

Eden House occupies the site of the non-conformist British School, which was founded in 1842, just before the Anglican National School. Here the Mutual Improvement Society met in the 1860s, with lectures on usually rather serious subjects. One was entitled "Rome and its Catacombs, or Walks among the Dwellings and Graves of the Early Christians". Another on "Mesmerism" lasted for over three hours! A poster survives for the illustrated talk on The Pilgrim's Progress held on 15th May 1860.

Opposite, **The Limes** was home to Elham's eponymous policeman, Wellington Boot, a Lancastrian whose false teeth clicked as he spoke, and who addressed everyone as Jack. When the Inspector asked him on one occasion if all the village knew of some dangerous drugs that had been lost, he is said to have replied "I've told my wife and Mrs Ames".

The Old House was home to Elham's doctor throughout the nineteenth century. Elham has had a doctor continuously since at least 1639.

The size of the **Methodist Church**, built in 1839, reflects the importance of non-conformity in nineteenth century Elham. If the then vicar is to be believed, there were hardly any dissidents in the parish in the 1740s, yet the Independent community were strong enough to build the first chapel next door in the 1790s. They transferred to the Wesleyan Methodist connection in 1816, and continued to flourish. When Charles Richardson, the celebrated preacher known as the Lincolnshire Thrasher, came here from the 10th to the 16th April 1853, the collection came to £63.5.0¾, a vast amount at the time. His expenses were £3, so a great boost to local finances.

The Methodist community today is small, and would probably be glad of a collection of £60, but still functions well, often in conjunction with the parish church, in outreach programmes such as Lent Lunches, which bring people together for a good but frugal meal, and raise funds for the less fortunate.

In front of the original chapel are four gravestones. One is William Johnson, the grocer; another is Ephraim Coleman, who came to Elham from Brede in Sussex, where he had famously stood outside the churchyard and read the burial service for one of his brethren being buried within.

Lime Villas were built in 1908 on the site of earlier properties, including the former Chequer Inn. No depiction of any of these were known until recently, when a photo was found, taken in 1889, which shows the Chequer, and two of the lime trees which are now all gone, but gave the terrace its name.

The **Chequer,** shown on the site of 5 & 6 Lime Villas.


Frank Smith, Elham's Cobbler at Work

Cherry Gardens was Elham's first estate of council houses, built just before and during the Second World War. The modern house on the corner replaced the Victorian shoemaker's house with workshop attached.

Coopers has a fine early eighteenth century frontage, again on an older building. James Spillet, Elham's lawyer before Thomas Hodges, lived here from the 1720's. He wrote up all the parish account books, and his fine but distinctive lawyer's hand is easily recognisable. When he died in 1742, his probate inventory recorded £600 in "hopeful" debts, but also £110 which was "desperate" (might as well be forgotten).

No. 1 The Butts was built in 1856. **No. 2** is another old house refronted in the Georgian period, and was home to one of Elham's carpenters up to the 1960s, with the workshop attached. Throughout the nineteenth century it was owned by members of the Maycock family. They also ran the brick kiln on the hill above the chalk pit.
It was probably here that Richard Marsh lived. When he died in 1711 a wonderfully detailed inventory lists all the timber he had in stock, oak, ash and elm in various sizes, cut timber still in the wood, fifty planes, twenty nine chisels, saws, pit saws, etc, and "two oval tables begun made". The assessors were two members of the Rolfe family. In the 1950s, one of the carpenters working for George Boughton was Len Rolfe from Lyminge, and his wheelwright was Tom Marsh.

The Sycamores (1893) was built for a curate at the parish church. It was later the home of Henry William Selby-Lowndes, the famous (or notorious) Master of the East Kent Foxhounds.

Bankside and **St Zita** were built in about 1890. The name of the former describes the site, which falls away sharply, and was probably not built on earlier.

Nightingale House was built by the Elham and Acryse Nursing Association as a home for the local District Nurse. It continued to have that role for some years under the NHS, but is now a private house.

Telephone Exchange This building replaced the earlier manual switchboard which was operated by the Post Master Edward Smith (shown below) and located in King Post during the 1920s and 30s.

Village Hall Our present Village Hall was built in 2000 with the help of Lottery funding. The main hall is named in honour of John Neumark, who led the committee which obtained that funding. He was later awarded the MBE, partly in recognition of that.

The hall's predecessor had been the Village Hall for forty years, but started life as the TS Barham, headquarters of the local Sea Cadet Corps, a great facility for local lads, not only from the Elham Valley, but also many from the mining community of Aylesham. Some went on to join the Navy, but all benefitted from the discipline of belonging to a training corps.

The field, on part of which the Hall is built, is named Silverdown, not from its fertility, but because of its thin soil, exposing the chalk when ploughed. In the Swing Riots of 1830 it was at the entrance to this field that the second machine breaking expedition met on 25 August.

The Gore A triangular field bounded on all sides by the King's highway (as a title deed of 1683 has it). Now home to village football, it was for many years the cricket ground, where the young Les Ames, the Kent and England wicketkeeper batsman, played his first games.

Returning to the centre of the village the first few houses we see all belong to the nineteenth or twentieth centuries, but there is good evidence that the medieval village also extended this far.

2 Silverhill Villas was the home of Mrs Bessie Kate Bayly, known professionally as Katie Johnson, who had a long acting career, though her enduring fame rests mainly on her last role in "The Ladykillers", with Alec Guiness et al. When Lyminge Dramatic Society put up a poster on the telegraph pole opposite for their production of "The Ladykillers" in 2015, they had no idea of the connection.

Denmark House For many years it was a grocers, using the catchy advert "Stop at the Shop at the Top of the Street". During rationing, canny housewives shopped there first, as Mr Newing sometimes forgot to remove the coupons from their Ration Books.

Fairfield Cottage was the childhood home of Les Ames. Next door at **Vale View** he had many distant cousins. Mrs George Ames gave birth to nineteen children, and used to remark "He only has to throw his shirt on the bed and I'm in the family way".

There was a Georgian fronted cottage, and an attached stable with workshop over, at the front of the site now occupied by **Vayles** and **High Gable.** One of the village carriers, John Spicer, operated from here, setting out for Canterbury every Tuesday and Saturday at 10 a.m. His trade received a body blow when the railway opened to Canterbury in 1889. His successor, Frederick Palmer, was also a coal merchant, operating from the siding at Elham station. "Smoker" Wiles is shown here (right) standing in the doorway of his cottage.

Hunters' Moon is the first old house we come to. It was given its present name when a tearoom from the thirties to the fifties; it had earlier been two properties, known as Magpie Cottages.

Wayfaring, built on the site of an old thatched cottage, was left to the Elham Community Trust, and extended to provide two homes for older people with connections to the village.

The War Memorial, dedicated in 1920, was designed by F. C. Eden, 2nd cousin to Anthony Eden, who lived at Park Gate, Elham when Secretary of State for War during WW2. F. C. Eden was the architect who did much work in the parish church in the early twentieth century. The stone came from the quarry at Chilmark in Wiltshire. It has twenty-nine names from WW1, but recent research shows that at least forty from the parish lost their lives in that conflict. The ten names of Second World War dead are probably a complete record.

Fairfield House, like Fairfield Cottage, reminds us that in the field behind the four annual fairs were held on Palm, Easter, and Whit Mondays, and on the feast day of St Denis or Dionysius, 9th October. After the change of calendar in 1752, the latter was held on the 20th October. On 20th October 1756, the Overseers of the Poor gave the children of the workhouse a shilling to spend at the fair.

We now enter **The Row** which becomes **Old Road** at its further end, and was the only north-south route through the village until the 1840s.

West End House was a grocer's from 1830 or earlier until Liptons, who had taken over Vyes, the East Kent grocery chain, closed it down in 1970. As with another grocer's in the village, we know about it in 1830 from witness statements during the Swing Riots. The shopkeeper, William Johnson, walked with John Rootes, the parish constable, to the White Horse at Wingmore, shortly after renamed the Palm Tree,

and deposed how they met a group of rioters. Johnson, a Methodist, was not unsympathetic to their cause.

Old Cottages have a Sun Insurance mark, one of three in the village. The great thing when such marks remain *in situ* is that they bear the policy number, and the details can be checked in the company's records, now in the Museum of London. In this case the policy holder was a blacksmith, and it covered all three cottages in the row. In 1674, there were four cottages, known as Hornsdown Row, which Henry Hayman bought from four members of the Gibson family.

Oak Cottage is Grade 2 listed, and parts of the walls are old, but it was entirely rebuilt by Palmer & Pitcher, in 1920. An examination of the jettied beams of the first floor shows that they were saw cut, and were in fact made using a steam-driven circular saw in the carpenter's yard opposite.

The Blue House, built in 2000, is on the site of Elham's last blacksmith's forge, which operated until the nineteen fifties, later being used by a carpenter. The circular metal plate in the forecourt marks the place where metal tyres were applied to wheels, in a process known as "cutting and shutting". Here too stood the beerhouse known as the Black Duck, where a local farmer lost his life when he failed to duck when riding his horse out of the pub yard.

Southdown Cottages. Their name is interesting, as they were built by the widow of a sheep farmer, who was also one of the two from Elham, both members of the File family, who were founder members of the Kent or Romney Marsh Sheep-Breeders' Association in 1895.

The new house next door incorporates the walls of the **Bible Christian Chapel**, built in 1865 and holding its last service (as the United Methodist Church) in 1935. The Bible Christians were a radical West Country sect, first mentioned in Elham in 1829. This may be significant to the Swing Riots of the following year, and it is known that Ingram Swain was a member.
During WW2 the building housed the village fire pump, and poles in the land opposite were used to dry the wet hoses.

Like many houses we will see throughout the village, **Oxenden Cottage** has a Georgian frontage hiding an earlier structure. Elham residents were prosperous enough to refront their houses in the eighteenth century, but not to rebuild from scratch. It was returned to single occupation in the 1960s, having been divided into two for many years.

In fact the only house in Elham built from scratch in the 1700s was **Ann's Cottage**, built in 1744 by Richard Baldock, a bricklayer, for his own occupation, and very cheaply built at that. In 1846 it was the scene of a family tragedy. Its then occupants were Sharrock Rudd Bragg, a 29 year old bricklayer, his 26 year old wife, a daughter of three, and a son of four months. They also had a lodger, William Jaggers, a young teacher at the British School, who occupied the bedroom to the left, while the Braggs had the even smaller one to the right. Jaggers woke at about 6 a.m. on 30 September, having heard some noise in the Bragg's bedroom. He also thought that there was someone at the front door. There was no-one there, and he turned to see blood coming through the floor of the Bragg's bedroom. He got Mrs Quested, wife of the blacksmith who lived on the chapel site. Together they entered the room to a scene of carnage. Bragg had stoved in the heads of his wife and daughter with a coal hammer, and cut his own throat with a razor. He was dead, but both wife and daughter were still just alive, and Dr Pittock came up from the High Street, but could not save them. The baby was beside his mother and unharmed, and was taken to his aunt and uncle in Cullings Hill.

Someone rode into Canterbury to fetch the East Kent Coroner, Mr De Lassaux, who lived at West Gate House, and he came and conducted the inquest that day at the King's Arms. The *Kentish Gazette* must also have been alerted, as their next edition carried a full account with all the gory details, which Victorians so much loved. Evidence of Bragg's depressive state was adduced, and the verdict was that he had committed the deeds while of unsound mind. But had he thought there might be something between his wife and the young lodger?

Sharrock Rudd Bragg junior went to live with his aunt and uncle in Cullings Hill, and in the 1861 census, when he was fourteen, his occupation was photographer! He had probably been set up in that profession by Elham's vicar, the Rev. Walker Wodehouse, who took some pioneering photos in the 1850s. Sadly, Bragg was to die at the age of twenty-two.

Updown Cottage takes its name from the field behind, which descends into the side valley, and with **Well Cottage** next door was once a single hall house. Here is the third Sun Insurance mark. The property was already divided into two when Richard Friend took out this policy in 1765. He also insured a malthouse, the Chequer inn, which stood in the High Street, and a windmill at Stelling Minnis (not on the site of the survivor there).

Coincidentally, Elham's windmill was next door. Demolished in 1924, it stood at the top of the track by the **Mill House**, which survives. Another mill stood further to the north, and is shown on Andrews, Dury and Herbert's map of 1769. This was a seed mill.

Prospect Terrace was built in 1902, two years before mains water came to the village, and had outside bucket loos, some of which were still in use when main drainage came in 1964. By contrast Lime Villas in the High Street were built in 1908 with inside flushing lavatories.

Manor Cottage is a timber-framed house of the baffle entry type, considerably older than its brick and flint skin. The brackets remaining on the side wall once held a sign pointing "To the Railway Station". "Tory" Carswell lived here all her life; her full name, Pretoria, marked her out as a child of the Boer War, perhaps not as unlucky as the village boy named Frederick Diamond Jubilee Smith.

Elham Manor was owned by the Kentish heiress Juliana de Leybourne. After her death in 1376, it became part of the endowment of St Stephen's Chapel, Westminster, which later became the debating chamber of the House of Commons. The house was rebuilt some time after that on its earlier undercroft, and was probably originally jettied on all four sides. After the dissolution of the monasteries, it went through various lay hands, including the Williamses from Ross on Wye, and the Oxendens of Broome Park, who bought it in 1796. None of the owners lived here. Among the tenants were three generations of the Culling family, who gave their name to the adjacent hill. When the last Culling died in 1940, the house was bought by Professor C. Northcote Parkinson. His struggles with the Rural District Council, the Timber Control Commission, and other authorities, while trying to restore the house helped to form the ideas which eventually became Parkinson's Law.
It was Parkinson who divided the house into two, so **Manor House Cottage**, the later part, is now a separate property, with its fine vegetable garden.

The house name **Hammel** opposite recalls that this was the home meadow of the Manor.
It was here at the bottom of **Cullens Hill** that occurred one of the farcical incidents during the Tithe Protests of the 1930s. Two furniture vans loaded with policemen were entering into the village. Coming down the hill, the brakes of the following vehicle failed and it crashed into the first. All the coppers inside were badly shaken, but none seriously injured.

At **Westbank** Mrs Hubble, widow of the village grocer, ran a small school in the 1930s and 40s. Among her pupils was Audrey Ruston, later to become Audrey Hepburn. Strange coincidence therefore that another very different film star should die here. Katie Johnson, who found fame late in life as the old lady in the Ladykillers, had lived at Silverhill Villas, but died here at the home of her son, Johnson Bayly.

The Old House (previously called **The Old Lockup**) was Elham's original police station, built soon after the establishment of the Kent County Constabulary in 1859, with cells in the basement. The ground floor served as the school kitchen during the forties and fifties (a thoroughly impractical arrangement), while the KCC hired another house (The Limes) for the village bobby!

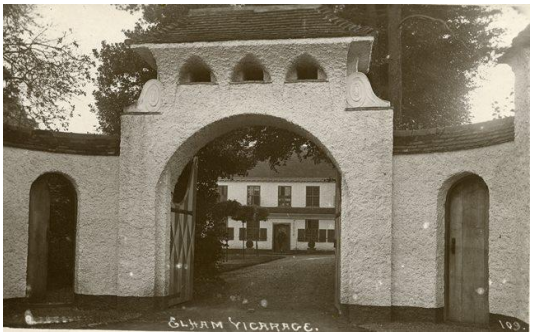
The houses of **Hunters' Bank** were built on land of the East Kent Hunt, whose kennels are still at the top of the bank. The Hunt first came to Elham in the 1820s and the original hunt servants' cottages, **North Cottage** and **South Cottage,** are opposite **Elham Surgery**, built by public subscription in 1978.

Proceeding down Vicarage Lane, we pass **Chichester Place** on our left, built by George Chichester Oxenden, son of Sir Henry of Broome Park, who faced ninety-four rioters on the night of 20th September 1830. He also gave the village the land opposite on which the village school was built in 1844, now replaced by a block of private retirement flats (**Church Walk**).

Carefully crossing **New Road**, built at the same time as the school, with its avenue of trees planted in 1904, we see the new School of 1970 on the right, incorporating the **Sir John Williams Hall**, built (for £220) in 1871, following the Education Act of the previous year, and recently refurbished at a cost of £70,000.

The Pound has on it the sycamore tree planted to commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897. It has many descendants around the village.

The architect of **The Vicarage** in 1970 was John Conrad, son of Joseph. He also designed the Church Hall, and the village garage, now the Cosy Tea Rooms, and Mount Lodge, a distinctive house of 1924, the year of his father's death.



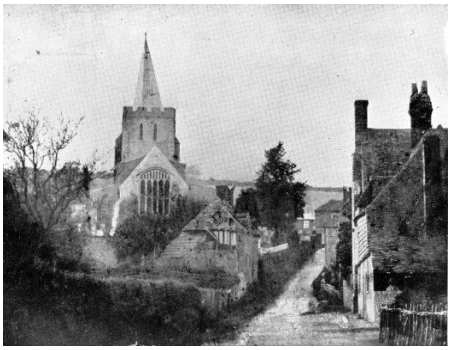
The Old Vicarage had a Georgian frontage of mathematical tiles until 1900, when Elham's new vicar, Alard de Bourbel, and his architect, F. C. Eden, completely transformed it, and added the gateway. The house appears to be seventeenth century in origin.

Yew Tree House (opposite these cottages) was a carpenter and wheelwright's until 1956, but had also been a cooperage until the early nineteenth century, when the former market town was almost self-sufficient. Like so many Elham houses, its brick facade encloses a much earlier timber-framed house. The probate inventory of John Rigden, taken on the 3rd July 1723, certainly relates to it, but it is not possible to identify the rooms listed there.

Church Cottage, which abuts the wall of the churchyard, incorporates a timber-framed house of the fourteenth century, which may have been the original priest's house.

Down the footpath and turning left into **The Orchards** we pass **Hog Green** on the right, a bungalow estate of 1963, built on one of the seven fields in the parish called Hog Green in the Tithe Apportionment of 1845 The first houses in The Orchards were built in 1953 on what was ostensibly a green field site, but a photo of 1855 shows two cottages at the far end, and finds in gardens suggest that the whole area may have been occupied before the market went into decline in the seventeenth

century. Were this development to happen today, an archaeological survey would no doubt reveal much more of the site's history.



In the 1855 photo, **Water Farm** was a medieval house with an Elizabethan extension. Today it is an Elizabethan house with a Victorian extension. The fenestration is nothing much, but the brickwork is good, particularly around the door.

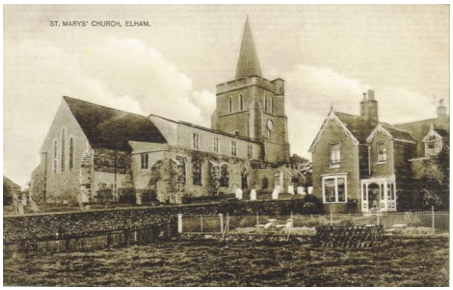
The Elham Valley Railway ran from 1887 till 1947, and in the misnamed **The Halt**, we can just make out the platform of Elham Station, the only evidence remaining here, apart from the Stationmaster's House (out of sight) and the two workers' cottages. There were benefits for the village of course; farmers could get in feed and fertilisers

and export their produce more economically, and coal and other goods arrived more easily. But it also proved the catalyst for the centre of business activity to move back from Elham to Lyminge.
This is primarily because Lyminge was that much closer to the expanding resort of Folkestone. But there was also more suitable building land at Lyminge, and critically three landowners and two builders who seized the opportunity to cash in. The cattle market at Lyminge had its own siding, and hundreds of cattle and thousands of sheep passed through. Elham did acquire some good Edwardian villas, but it was on a much smaller scale than at Lyminge.

The line ran to the right of the line of poplar trees to North Elham, where the crossing keeper's cottage survives. Merton College, Oxford, have been patrons of the living since 1267, and they held land at North Elham, only about forty acres, but with an importance out of all proportion, partly because of the collection of tithes, but also through the enterprise of their steward, who in the early fourteenth century went each year to the Cotswolds and bought horses at Winchcombe and other fairs, bringing them back to Elham for resale. When the college built a new Tithe Barn in 1344, the oaks used in its construction were felled at their estate at Farleigh in Surrey and transported to Greenwich (one of the teams of oxen came down from Eynsham, Oxfordshire). The timbers then went by sea to Folkestone (where they were guarded day and night: Folkestone must have had a reputation) before being hauled by teams of oxen up to North Elham. Sadly that great barn is no more, though part of one aisle survived to within living memory.

Bricks had been made in Elham certainly since Tudor times, and a great many of the bricks used in the building of Sandgate Castle in 1539/40 came from the parish, some of them from Clavertigh, close to where the clay was obtained for a large scale brickmaking enterprise at the end of the nineteenth century. It was a very strange operation as **The Elham Valley Brickworks** stood in this field about 200 yards north of where we are standing, but the brick earth was excavated about half a mile away, high up on the other side of the valley at Exted, then liquefied and piped, largely by gravity, across the valley and the railway. It was then held in lagoons before use. The company operated from just after the coming of the railway until 1908. There was probably not much brick earth left by then, but closure was precipitated by the manager running off with the company's cash.
Earlier in the nineteenth century there had been a brick kiln on the hill above the chalk pit. Incidentally lime had also come from Elham for the building of Sandgate Castle.

St Mary's Cottages were built on the site of earlier cottages in 1911. They were designed by F. C. Eden. In this instance the flushing toilets were in separate outhouses.



Five Bells was one of the many pubs which prospered with Elham's market. Like many such pubs, its name reflected the number of bells in the church tower. It was renamed The Cherry Tree in 1740, but a new owner changed it back to The Five Bells in 1770, although the churchwardens had sent the original five bells to Whitechapel in 1762 and had them recast as a ring of eight. The total cost of recasting and rehanging the bells in 1762/3 was £102; when it was done again in 1970 the Whitechapel foundry's bill was £2,700; today it would be approaching £100,000.
The Five Bells closed its doors in about 1800, and by 1830 it was the home of Henry Reed, one of the leaders of the machine breaking gang in the Swing Riots. In 1938 to 1940, it was here that little Audrey Ruston lived with her mother, the Baroness von Heemstra, lodging with Mr and Mrs Butcher.
If you stand close to the wall of Five Bells, you can see the outline of the nave roof as it was before the present clerestory was constructed in the fourteen-sixties.

The roof timbers of Five Bells, examined recently by Andrew Linklater of Canterbury Archaeological Trust, show that it was built at about the same time – perhaps the same craftsmen were involved.

St.Mary's Church is an exceptionally fine village church, built of flint rubble and ragstone, and dating from about 1180. It has good lancet windows, and later Decorated work. There were many alterations and additions during the 15th century, and these include the clerestory, the aisle windows, and the north chancel chapel. The church is, however especially noteworthy for the superb quality of its furnishings, a number of which were the gift of a former vicar, the Rev. Alard Charles de Bourbel, B.O., (1900-1935), with other items contributed by the Rev. Robert Henry Isaac Williams, M.A., (1935-1957), and others of the parish.

We hope you have enjoyed your visit to Elham, either in person or online.
Thank You.
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