



DAWLISH LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

Newsletter

July 2012

Dear Members,

Our last outing to the Customs House at Exeter Quay in May was very interesting, Mavis Stuckey has reported on it in this newsletter.

Our next book, written and assembled by Tricia Whiteaway, features the history of The Lawn from early 1800s onwards. Hopefully it will be available at our next meeting at the Manor House on 6 August.

Incidentally, we are running out of subjects to write books about. If any members have ideas please talk to a committee member please.

With the recent celebrations for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, questions have been asked as to members' experiences when King George VI died and the coronation of the Queen. Can you remember your local involvement, church services, parades, street parties etc. Did you go to London? It would be good to report on your memories in the newsletter...

Derek Wain

**Our next meeting will be on
6th August, at The Manor
House.**

**John Partridge
will give a presentation on
Evacuation from Salcombe**

Black Swans 2012

Here in Dawlish we have always been proud of our black swans – watching parents guiding their cygnets up and down their part of the Brook. Last year it was a very sad time for the swans as the seagulls either stole or damaged the eggs so it was lovely to see the first of this year's cygnets taken into the aviary where they were cared for by their parents and the 'Duck-man'. It was a pleasure to stop for a few minutes on the way to the shops to watch their progress – usually three of the four behaving and one off about its own affairs... I don't know if it was always the same one. I am always surprised at how quickly they grow into gangly "teenagers" before becoming as beautiful as their parents.

At Easter it was lovely to see yet another little cygnet peeping out from under its parent. This little one has been taken into the incubator as I have been told its parents are rather too old to care for a youngster. I am sure that it is in the best place and will be cared for until it can join its grown-up relatives on the brook.

Mavis Stuckey

Families who helped forge Dawlish

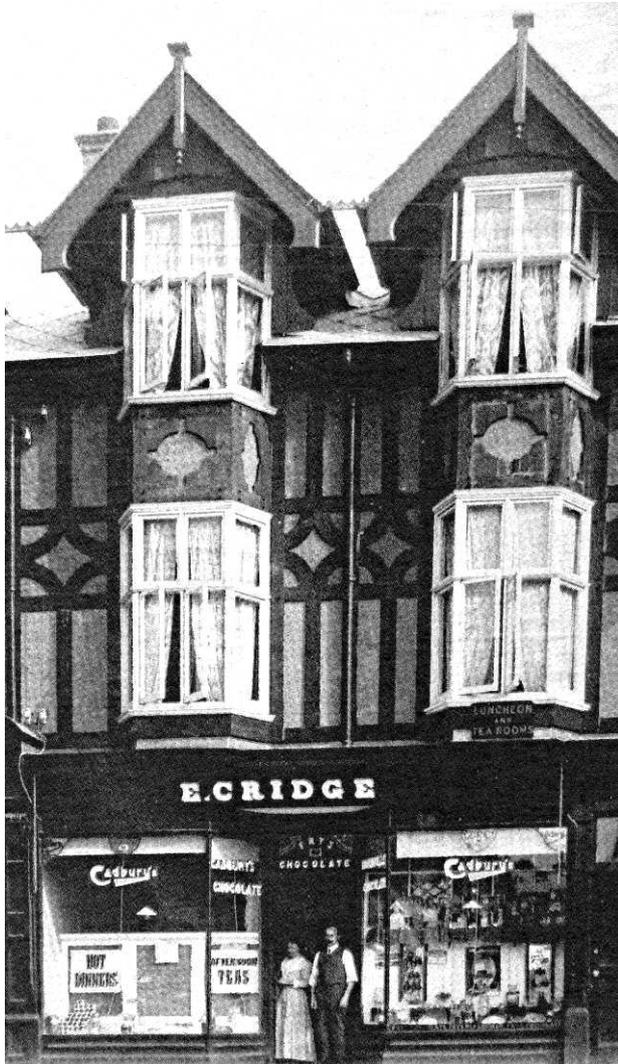
A name that appeared for many years from the mid 1800s was the Cridge family. John Cridge, born circa 1806 in Stoke, near Taunton, Somerset, by 1841 was married and living in Queen Street giving his trade as a gardener, then Master Gardener in 1851. He had married Ellen (name unknown) of Kentisbeare and they had four children, daughters Sarah and Mary Jane and two sons Robert and James who both followed in their father's trade.

John had a greengrocers shop in Queen Street for thirty years from 1841 and leased two plots of land somewhere on Teignmouth Hill, a very suitable area for market gardening. By 1881 he had moved round the corner to the top end of The Strand (now Bath Travel) where his youngest son, James and his new wife, joined him living over the shop. James took over when his father died in 1882 and it was he who owned the land opposite (the top of The Strand car park, previously the gardens to the houses on Lawn Terrace), which he offered in the 1930s to the Council first for a 'Lawn' Pavilion to be built and then for tennis courts, but both offers were declined.

James had married Mary Louise and they had their first child Edwin in 1881 followed on a regular basis by George, Mary, Emily, Henry, Lily, Walter, Beatrice and Frederick and finally finished with Lucy Ethel in 1900 but sadly not all survived. They stayed at the top of the Strand until about 1919 when the greengrocer's shop was taken over by Mr Crapp, and they moved to the bottom to take over part of the new building built on the site of the old London Inn. This building designed in black and white pseudo Elizabethan style, became Cridge's Cafe taken over by his son Edwin. (See photo over-page.) It then became Holman's Cafe 1937; then, remembered by most locals and visitors alike as Brunt's cafe until in 1956 when it became Woolworths. However, they also had the shop opposite being Cridge & Son's grocery shop (that was Threshers and more recently The Children's Society).

John & Ellen's eldest son Robert was also a gardener but of the domestic kind and in 1881 was gardener to Elm Grove House, living in Elm Grove Lodge, then in 1901 he was gardener to Mrs Brown in Oak Park House.

By his second wife he had three sons and four daughters, twins Bessie Jane and Ann Elizabeth, then Lily and Lydia. His eldest son Edward married but did not seem to have any children and his second son James was an attendant at Wonford Mental Hospital who had married Elizabeth, had two children, John who had a pub in St David's, Exeter, and a daughter Dorothy. Third son William went to Somerset where he was a plumber in Currey Rivel!



Edwin Cridge at his Café, at east end of Strand



Cridge's shop at east end of Brunswick Place

In the 1910 Trade Directory there were five Cridges listed - Cridge & Son, grocers, 32 The Strand; Mrs Eliza Ann Cridge, refreshment rooms, 22 Brunswick Place; whilst her daughters Lily and Lydia had the art and needlework repository next door, 23 Brunswick Place; and their father Robert Cridge was gardener to a Mrs Brown in Brunswick Place (who later moved to Oak Park House). It would seem that Mrs Eliza had moved across the Lawn to take over Cridge's Cafe whilst Lily and Lydia eventually closed the needlework repository and took over their mother's shop, named it Rose Cafe and traded until the 1940s when it was taken over by M. Stone. The last Cridge was Lydia who died in 1967.

Tricia Whiteaway

Outing to Exeter Quay Custom House



The afternoon of Monday 14 May 2012 saw 19 members of DLHG meet up outside the Custom House on the Quayside in Exeter. We were taken on an interesting tour of the building led by one of the famous 'Red Coats' who had given us a brief outline of the history of the quayside both before and after the building of the Custom House in 1681 – once you were aware of how many features from the past were incorporated into the modern Quay it was not too difficult to imagine the business of bygone days. Personally I was thrilled to actually see the fantastic plaster ceilings crafted by John Abbott who came from a family of plasterers at Frithelstock near Bideford. I had heard through Devon Archaeological Soc. about these ceilings – the carvings of bananas and elephants caused amusement as John Abbott had probably never seen any of those strange animals & fruits depicted. I was not disappointed – the detail and fragility of these carvings were truly fantastic. The carvings must be a lot stronger than they look having been in place for over 300 years including the bombing of Exeter. Another very interesting feature was a scrap of wallpaper from 17th century, hidden on a wall at the back of an original cupboard which was as fresh as Laura Ashley present day wallpaper. Once again Tricia had worked hard to organise the outing – even the rain stopped once we were on the quayside. Thanks also to Ian – the Red Coat guide. As usual a cream tea was the culmination of the afternoon – what would a DLHG outing be without the cream tea to discuss the outing & Exeter's hidden treasure.

Mavis Stuckey