

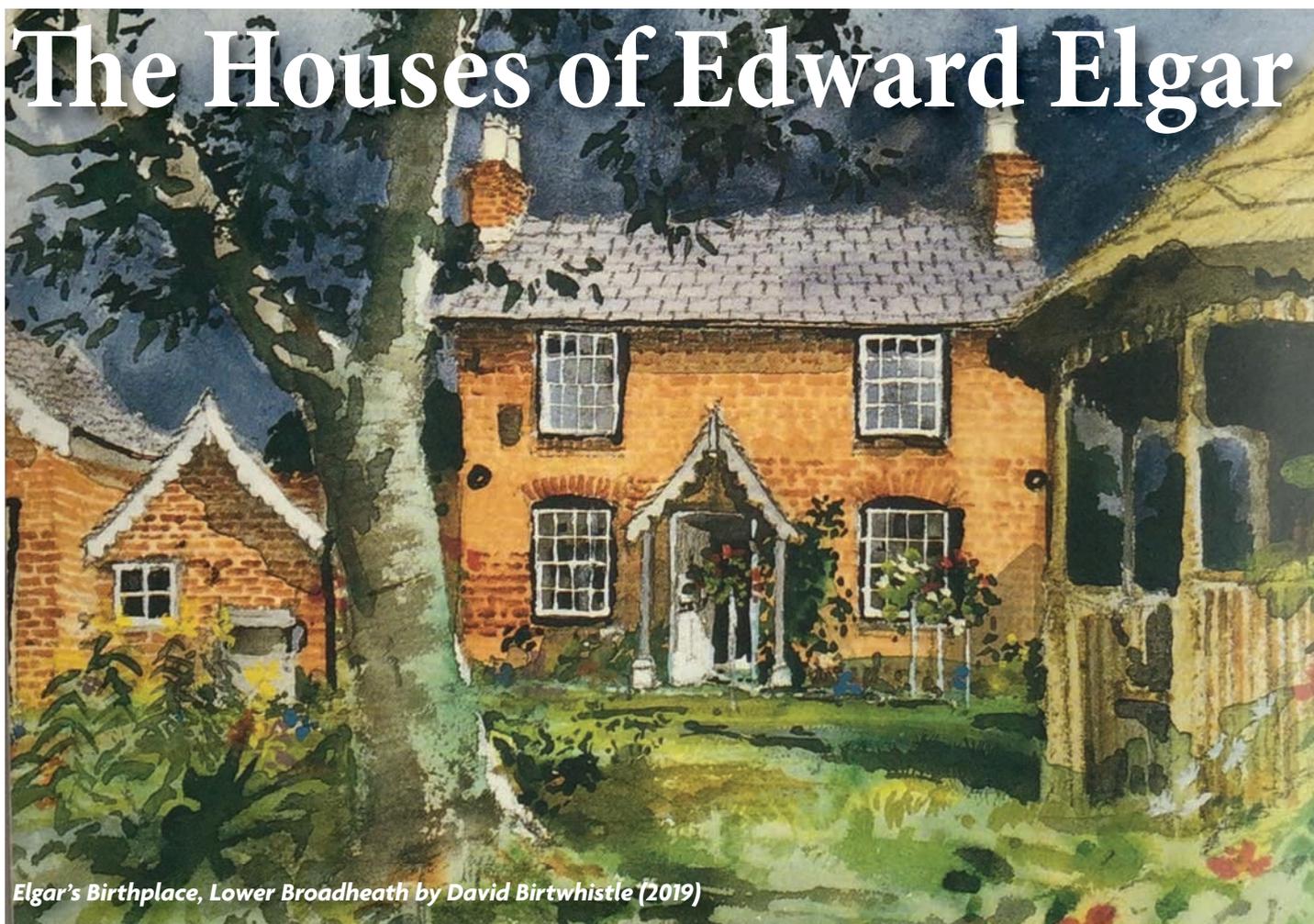
THE FRIENDS OF CROOME



NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2020 Issue 33

The Houses of Edward Elgar



Elgar's Birthplace, Lower Broadheath by David Birtwhistle (2019)

by Joe Tierney

During his life, Edward Elgar lived in twenty-one main residences. He was born on 2 June 1857, the fourth of seven children, at The Firs, Lower Broadheath near Worcester, now in the care of the National Trust, and spent his final years at Marl Bank, Worcester.

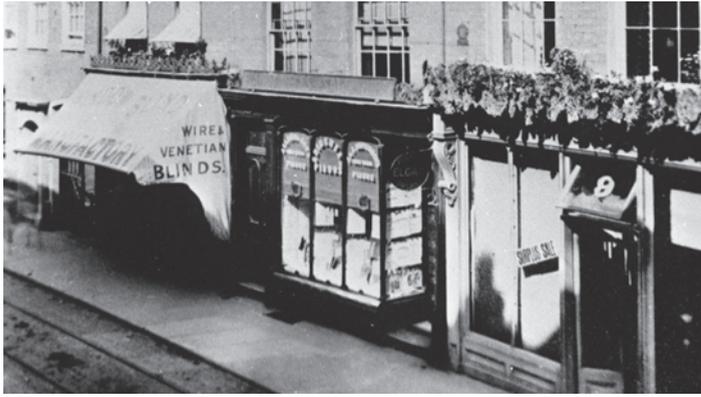
The Firs 1857 to 1859

Elgar's parents had rented The Firs in 1856. Elgar's father William had an established music business in the city of Worcester, some three miles from Lower Broadheath and only spent weekends at the cottage. It seems that the cottage in the Worcestershire countryside was the choice of Elgar's mother Ann who, having some artistic talent and an affinity with nature preferred her children to grow up in rural surroundings.



Early days at The Firs

friendsofcroome.org.uk

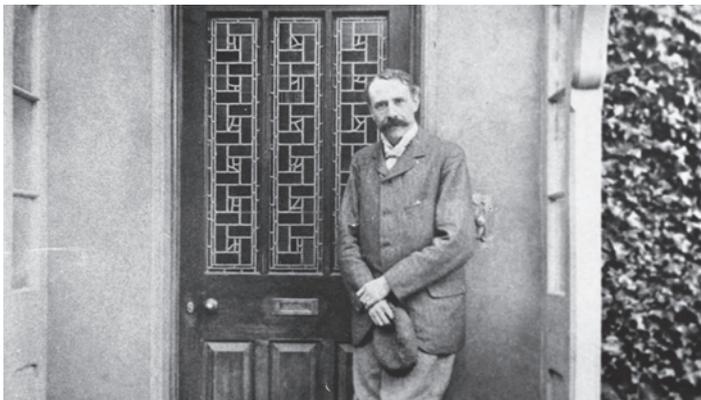


10 High Street, Worcester 1863 to 1879

In 1863 the family moved to live above the Elgar brothers' music shop. It was here that Edward received his grounding in the various aspects of music making to substitute for a formal musical education. The shop has now been demolished but the Gifford Hotel in Worcester carries a plaque to mark the approximate location of the shop.



Forli, Malvern Link 1891 to 1899 Alexandra Road, Malvern Link, provided a stable environment for Elgar almost to the end of the century. Here he completed *The Black Knight*, revised and published the *Serenade for Strings*, and composed *Scenes from the Bavarian Highlands*, *The Light of Life*, *King Olaf*, *The Banner of St George*, much of *Caractacus* and the *Enigma Variations*. An impressive list of works which reinforced his local reputation and expanded it into a national one.



Craeg Lea, Great Malvern 1899 to 1904

In 1899, possibly motivated by Edward's increasing fame and a desire to reflect that status, the Elgars decided to vacate Forli for something grander. They chose a house on the Wells Road about a mile south of the centre of Great Malvern. They named the house Craeg Lea, an anagram of C(arice), A(lice) and E(dward) Elgar: Alice being Elgar's wife and Carice the couple's daughter. The house is set on a bank above Wells

Road and Elgar chose a room on the upper floor for his study, giving him views across the Severn Valley and the Worcestershire countryside. Within a few months the Elgars got wind of a proposed property development across the road, which Edward feared would ruin the views from his study window. It is clear to anyone visiting Craeg Lea today that the Elgars' fears were totally unfounded, the views remain spectacular but the Elgars did not wait to find out. They started looking elsewhere and eventually settled on Plas Gwyn, a house on the eastern outskirts of Hereford.



Plas Gwyn, Hereford 1904 to 1912

An odd choice, although a rather grand house on the edge of the city, it is set back from the road in enclosed grounds. With little byways of views and for a now well-established national personality with heavy commitments in London and the main provincial centres, Hereford was an even less convenient base than Malvern. Perhaps therein lay the attraction, providing something of the isolation Edward needed to continue composing. If so, it proved to be a successful choice, for here Elgar completed *The Kingdom*, arranged the *Wand of Youth* suites and composed both symphonies, the violin concerto, the *Introduction and Allegro for Strings*, two more *Pomp and Circumstance Marches* and a mass of smaller works. Not since 'Forli' had Elgar produced so many works from the same house.



Marl Bank, Rainbow Hill, Worcester 1929 to 1934

In December 1929, Elgar bought Marl Bank, a large house of solid appearance set on a bank to the east of Worcester city centre with a good view of the cathedral. With the passage of time and the acquisition of a more permanent home, Elgar appears to have regained the inspiration to compose, for the music began to flow again: the *Severn Suite*, a fifth *Pomp and Circumstance March*, the *Nursery Suite* together with a number of shorter salon pieces. An opera – *The Spanish Lady* – and a *Third Symphony* were to follow but it was not to be for, in October 1933, Elgar was diagnosed as having terminal cancer. He died, peacefully, at home on 23 February 1934.

Croome's Chinese Bridge



*The reconstructed Chinese bridge at Croome
Green Oak Carpentry Company*

© Chris Wynne-Davies

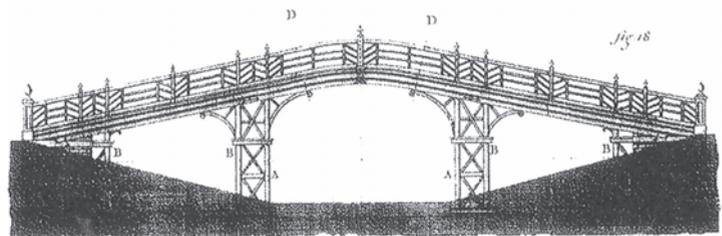
by Chris Wynne-Davies

In the mid-1700s, when 'Chinoiserie' vied with Rococo and Gothic as the fashionable style of the day, British designers and craftsmen created their own fanciful imitations of Chinese designs. This was the style adopted by William Halfpenny for the wooden bridge he designed for the 6th Earl of Coventry at Croome. The designs were published in 1749 in his pattern book 'Developments in Architecture and Carpentry'.

The 6th Earl of Coventry, while still Lord Deerhurst, began work on the parkland at Croome in 1747. By 1748 a stretch of water crossed by the Chinese bridge by William Halfpenny was completed, linking the mansion house to the wider parkland.

William Halfpenny was an English architect and builder in the first half of the eighteenth-century, and prolific author of builder's pattern books. In some of his publications he described himself as "architect and carpenter," and his books concentrate on the practical information a builder would need, as well as appealing to "gentleman draughtsmen" designing their own houses.

Little is known of Halfpenny's life: he seems to have been based in Richmond, then in Surrey, and nearby London, perhaps also spending a period based in Bristol. He also worked in Ireland. He wrote and probably built in collaboration with his son John Halfpenny in the later years of his career. The one work which can be positively identified as Halfpenny's is the Chinese bridge at Croome.

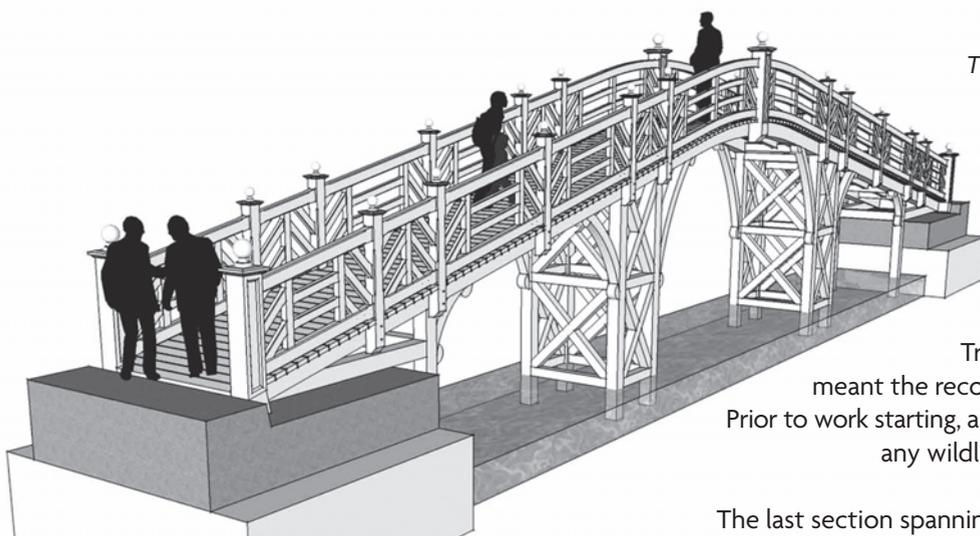


Halfpenny's drawing of the Chinese bridge at Croome

When Lancelot 'Capability' Brown arrived in 1751 to redesign both the house and the garden at Croome, the bridge was one of the few features that he kept. The Chinese bridge appears in a 1758 painting by Richard Wilson of Croome Court and garden but by the early nineteenth-century it had disappeared into the artificial river it once spanned.



Richard Wilson painting of the Chinese Bridge, 1758



The new design for the Chinese bridge

The project to recreate Brown's original landscape, started in 1996 and involving the dredging of the river, led to the discovery, in 2009, of the original bridge foundations and fragments of old timbers. This, together with Halfpenny's original drawing and Richard Wilson's painting, enabled the Green Oak Carpentry Company to create a design which matched the original bridge as much as possible.

A generous grant from The Monument Trust founded by the late Simon Sainsbury meant the reconstruction of the bridge could go ahead. Prior to work starting, a section of the river had to be drained and any wildlife relocated to another part of the river.

The last section spanning the river was hauled into position with gigantic cranes. The bridge was constructed using oak and the upright legs of 'heartwood' a timber well suited to marine environments. A colourful celebration took place to mark the official opening of the bridge in July 2015. Now, visitors can once again use the bridge linking Croome Court to the wider parkland.

Chris Wynne-Davies

Captain Henry Amelius Coventry 1842-1885

by Hugh Worsfold

The 9th Earl of Coventry owned two Grand National winners: in 1863 Emblem won at odds of 10/1 and the following year Emblematic won at odds of 4/1. In both years the jockey was George Stevens and the trainer Edwin Weever. Stevens also rode winners in 1856, 1869 and 1870. In the 1865 race the jockey of the winning horse Alcibiade was Captain Henry Amelius Coventry, a cousin of the 9th Earl. In 1869, Captain Coventry married Evelyn Mary Craven, whose sister, Blanche, had married the 9th Earl in 1865.

'Jockeypedia' records Henry Coventry's career: Captain Henry Amelius Coventry was the 23-year-old Grenadier Guards officer who rode Alcibiade to victory in the 1865 Grand National. Born on May 15, 1842, he first rode in public in the Grand Military Steeplechase at Warwick, coming second on Martyr to Major Wombwell's Fanny. The following day, in the Scurry Handicap, Henry and Martyr tried again, this time successfully, giving Henry his maiden win. The partnership then won a race at Cheltenham, beating Fordham's celebrated mare, Levity.

Henry went on to win many good races, including the Veteran's Race at Rugby on Bounce while, on his own mare Agnes, he won several military races. At Harrow, Henry further enhanced his reputation by beating the crack rider Charley Boyce on Deception. Having won another race on Agnes, this time at Windsor, he sold the mare for 'a great deal of money'. In 1863, Henry went to Baden-Baden to ride Bridegroom for Mr 'Cherry' Angell in the Grand Steeplechase. Mr Angell insisted that his horse be ridden in a certain manner: Henry complied but Bridegroom was unsettled by the new tactics and disappointed. Then came his second mount for Mr Angell - Alcibiade in the Liverpool Grand National. History records

that this was Henry's first and last ride in the race. Alcibiade and Hall Court, the mount of Captain Tempest, jumped the last together with Hall Court patently going the better. Captain Tempest, however, failed to hold his horse together as Henry delivered his horse with perfect judgement to get up on the line. This was the National's closest ever finish (up to then).



B. J. Angel's Alcibiade (Capt. H. Coventry up) winner by a head, 1865.

Henry's last notable win came on Emperor III in the 1867 National Hunt Steeplechase at Clapham Park, near Bedford. Henry was the elder brother of crack amateur rider Arthur Coventry. He died on June 29, 1885, aged 43. He left £6,362.





The Mayflower, Edward Winslow and the Coventry family



The Mayflower was an English ship that transported the first English Puritans, known today as the Pilgrims, from England to the New World in 1620. After a gruelling ten weeks at sea, the Mayflower, with 102 passengers and a crew of about 30, reached America, dropping anchor at Cape Cod on 11 November 1620.

Edward Winslow born in Droitwich, Worcestershire in 1595 travelled on the Mayflower. He was one of several senior leaders on the ship and also later at Plymouth Colony. In Plymouth he served in a number of governmental positions such as assistant governor, three times was governor and also was the colony's agent in London. Winslow named his home in New England, 'Careswell,' after a family home in Kerswell Green, where his grandfather and previous generations had been yeoman farmers. Kerswell Green is just a short distance from Croome Court which was acquired by the Coventry family in 1592.

The Coventry family were also involved in the Mayflower story, in particular Thomas Coventry (1578-1640). After the death of his first wife, Coventry married again in 1610 Elizabeth Pitchford (née Aldersley), the widow of William Pitchford of London a grocer/apothecary and member of the Grocers' Guild. It is probably through her connections that Thomas started to work with the Guilds acting as their lawyer in various cases. He was the first lawyer to be invited to attend a Guild banquet and the first lawyer (in 1627) to be admitted to the Guild as one of its freemen.

Thomas Coventry also became part of the 'Merchant Adventurers,' the group of English investors whose funded the Pilgrims' voyage on the Mayflower. In 1620, Coventry, now knighted and Solicitor General, was required to prepare a patent of incorporation of the "adventurers of the Northern Colony." This patent becomes the Great Charter of New England, and the foundation of all grants made within its territory. As Solicitor General, Attorney General and Lord Keeper, Thomas Coventry is involved with the production of charters, patents and administration of the various colonies and companies including the New England, Virginia and Massachusetts companies.



Edward Winslow

Around 1635, Edward Winslow was imprisoned in Fleet Prison, in London, for performing marriage ceremonies in New England without being an ordained minister (the pilgrims saw marriage as a civil affair rather than a church matter and so they were performed by a civil magistrate or leader and not a minister). The Lord Keeper interceded on Winslow's behalf and had him released. It is thought that the Coventry family and the Winslow family were close friends and that Lady Coventry on hearing the news wrote to her husband to ask him to act. In a letter from Edward Winslow to Governor John Winthrop written in 1640 he asserts that Lord Keeper Sir Thomas Coventry has been a good friend to the colony and his death would hit them hard. In 1655 Winslow died of fever while on an English naval expedition in the Caribbean against the Spanish.

Nicola Hewitt



Thomas Coventry





© Katherine Alker

Dunstall Castle

by Katherine Alker

Built by Robert Adam for the 6th Earl of Coventry in 1766, Dunstall Castle provided visitors with tangible proof of just how much land the Earl owned. In 1751, George William inherited the title of Earl of Coventry along with Croome Court and the surrounding estate. He wanted to create the best and most beautiful place that he could and to do this he employed Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, who was an up-and-coming designer at the time. Brown worked not just on the landscape but also the mansion. He enlarged the existing building by adding towers at each corner and wrapped the whole building in creamy-coloured Bath stone.

The parkland was remodelled to include a mile and three quarters-long man-made river with a lake, along with beautiful shrubberies and buildings, such as the grotto and the Rotunda. In order to do this, land had to be drained and some nearby houses were demolished, as well as the old church that once stood near Croome Court, with Brown designing a new one and positioning it on top of the hill where we see it now.

The 6th Earl also employed Robert Adam, an architect who

had just returned from the 'Grand Tour' in Italy. Adam designed the Temple Greenhouse in the garden to house the Earl's exotic plant collection, as well as many of the interiors for the new Croome Court.

In the wider parkland, woodlands were planted and more buildings were added so that the visitor would look further afield and marvel at how much land the Earl owned. One such building is Dunstall Castle, which was designed by Adam and built in 1766. At the time, it would have been just visible across the parkland from the south steps of the court and the guidebook to Croome – *Hortus Croomensis* by William Dean from 1824 – describes that view: [From the south] 'portico . . . expanding before the eye, is seen a vast plain of delicious verdure, gently varied in its surface, watered by the windings of its own river; animated by numerous herds of deer and embellished by a profusion of trees. . . . The long waving line of woodland is finely broken, in one part, by an opening which admits the view of artificial ruins, well designed, called Dunstall Castle.'



The tower's narrow staircase © Katherine Alker

Adam deliberately designed it as a whimsical folly with elements of both a castle and a church, as seen in the image of the building from Snape's survey of Croome of 1796 and a watercolour of Dunstall Castle by E.F. and T.F. Burney.



Dunstall Castle by E.F. and T.F. Burney. Pen and wash, 1781. (Worcester Record Office)

By 2009, the castle was getting close to becoming a real ruin. The National Trust at Croome were able to purchase and restore Dunstall Castle in 2010, thanks to substantial funding from Natural England. Most of the restoration work was to the top of the towers, the narrow spiral staircase and the tops of the walls. Inside the central tower of the Grade II listed



One of the towers under restoration, February 2010 © Katherine Alker

building (the building is judged to be particularly important, of more than special interest), a steep spiral staircase leads up to a small platform with views to the 'Capability' Brown-designed landscape, the Rotunda at Croome and the surrounding countryside.



The Duke of York visits Croome *by Nicola Hewitt*

The diary of Lady Dorothy Coventry (1872-1965), the second daughter of the 9th Earl of Coventry describes the visit in 1894 of The Duke of York (the future King George V) to Worcester and his stay at Croome Court: His Royal Highness was in Worcester to lay the foundation stone for the Victoria Institute in Worcester.

“Such a week as we are to have. This morning having galloped Albert on Smithmoor, as the Old Park is getting a trifle hard. He went well, I did not go this morning. We were very busy all the morning converting the library into a smoking room, and a nice comfortable place we made of it, then we put in writing paper etc. in all the rooms, and flowers, and in fact all the finishing touches, and all the rooms looked beautifully comfortable. Popsy started off about 3 o'clock looking rather lost in the very big landau with four bay horses, and two smart post boys, Old Cross¹ on Falstaff² as outrider to show the way.

Pershore station and the town were nicely decorated and a crowd of people witnessed H.R.H.'s arrival. There was very little cheering which made it somewhat awkward, it is such an unusual event to have such a visit, that the people hardly knew how to take it. I think that among the most amusing stories, is that of the old woman who wished so much that they could get up a small entertainment at the schoolroom so as to invite the Duke to it! They drove by Market Place and Baker's Hill Gate. Mrs. Porter and the children stood at the corner.

The boys stood on the steps to receive HRH and Tom made many a bow, we and Beauchamp and the Hindlips, who had arrived, were in the saloon. We then had tea, and after a good deal of conversation, Mother asked the Duke to plant a tree. First, he went up to his room and brought down Tom a photo which Princess May had sent him. It was in a very nice frame and I never saw anyone more pleased than little Tom. The Duke was nice to him and talked so kindly to him.



The room the Duke stayed in at Croome was photographed



Back row standing (L-R): Lady Dorothy Coventry, Viscount Cobham, Lord Hindlip, Lady Hindlip, Earl of Coventry, The Duke of York, Hon. George Allsopp, Sir Francis de Winton, Sir Charles Cust, Lady Anne Coventry.

Second row seated (L-R): Lady Barbara Coventry, Earl Beauchamp, Countess of Coventry, Viscountess Cobham, Lady Elcho.

Third row seated on floor (L-R): Hon. Reginald Coventry, Hon Thomas Coventry, Hon Henry Coventry.

WORCESTER & MALVERN

during his visit and featured in several publications. Today the room is very different: it contains the modern large bath. Then, we children and Beauchamp and Papa of course, accompanied HRH to the shrubberies, first going through the stables, none of them knew a horse from a cow except Lord Hindlip, so that was not much of a success. The tree was all ready to be planted, and Child³ stood near with the spade. HRH did his part in a workmanlike way, laughing and chatting all the time. The gentlemen then continued their walk around the lake etc. and we went in to help Mother receive Lord and Lady Cobham and Lady Elcho. We dined at 8.30 and the party was Sir Edmund and Lady Lechmere, Dean and Mrs. Forrest, Colonel Temple, Mrs Wheeler, the Mayor and Mrs. Williamson; George Allsopp had already arrived, so we were 26 to dinner. The long dining room looked beautiful, decorated with Papa's beautiful plate. I have never been at such a large dinner here. Mother and the Prince sat in the middle, facing the fireplace, it was such warm weather that really a fire was not necessary, but it had been lit just before dinner. I went in with Sir Charles Cush, he was very nice, when one talked to him, but rather melancholy and it was shy work trying to get anything out of him, especially as Tottie and Sir F. de Winton were just opposite. Barbara has Sir Edmund and the Dean.

Dinner did not take very long; it was beautifully done. The Mayor had his servant waiting at table, arrayed in the most gorgeous of liveries, then we had two extra waiters from the Gunters, great fine men, with beautiful manners. The three drawing rooms were thrown open and we sat mostly in the tapestry room. The gentlemen came out very soon after us, and the Duke was so nice going around the room talking to

the guests. But this thoughtful act was nipped in the bud by Lady Hindlip who went straight up to HRH. and asked him to play Bezique with her, he was obliged to comply, but we heard afterwards through Sir Francis, that it was most distasteful to him, as he hates gambling in any form, and also wanted very much to talk to the court people. The guests left at 11.30 and we ladies went to bed. The next morning, we breakfasted at 9.30 in the long dining room again, the waiting was not good otherwise everything else was alright. Bennett, the photographer, was waiting outside to take the group, it was rather fun, he took two positions. (See above)

Reg was AD. of the carriages and HRH, Mother, Papa and Sir F. de Winton went in the big landau, then came our landau driven by Pope⁴ with Juror and Justice looking very smart. Lady Cobham, Lady Elcho and Lord Hindlip and Beauchamp - then the sociable, Lady Hindlip, Lord Cobham and Henry - then the rest of us in the waggonette drawn by the wedding greys, and a post-boy. At the White Gate a few people waved their hats etc. Tom was amongst them. Then further on they got thicker and thicker, till at the lodge it was swelled into a large concourse, who cheered, but not very lustily. As we neared the Greens, we could see another crowd, and soon Fred Woodward's⁵ arch loomed into sight. It was over the road reaching from Mr Bateman's house to the orchard. The first really hearty cheer came from here, Fred Woodward leading it. At various intervals there were knots of enthusiastic people waving handkerchiefs etc. Kempsey was very nicely decorated. As we drew near the suburbs a regiment of volunteers met us, and also one of the police and all of the carriages which had driven in our wake were stopped, and we



Dorothy's sister Barbara's invitation to the lunch

went on slower, with our military escort around us. Worcester was quite beautifully got up and crowds and crowds lined the streets. At the Guildhall H.R.H. was met by the Mayor and Corporation and after speechifying we all embarked once more, this time the Royal carriage coming last. We soon reached the marquee, where the foundation stone was ready for laying. The Bishop read prayers, and it did not take long to perform the ceremony. Mr Ampthill, a man in a wig, read off all the merits of the new institutions and then our carriage having been called, we returned in the same order to the Guildhall for luncheon. About 300 people sat down at this meal and the Mayor did it beautifully.

It was extremely hot. HRH made a very nice speech. I think he was extremely nervous, but his voice never betrayed him for an instant. Mr. Corbet and the Mayor made two fine speeches. After luncheon we went off to the porcelain works and then into the Cathedral. This was the nicest part, it was all so quiet and cool and refreshing. The organist played a grand something of Bach, and then we went down below into the crypts. All the Canons and the Dean were in attendance. We walked through Canon Teignmouth Shaw's house to get to the Cathedral. After this we went to the Deanery, where the crowd of schoolboys, to whom the Duke had granted a week's holiday cheered lustily. We had most refreshing tea and then getting back into our equipages, we drove out of Worcester as fast as we could, in the order of the early morning.

It was nearly seven o'clock and we found Tom and Tottie waiting for us. Dinner was at 8.30 again, only the house party – the Duke looked white and tired, Mother not a bit, Lady Hindlip and Lady Elcho looked more fit for the grave than anything else. I had a beastly head, but know excitement and

heat always bring it on with me. I had dear Sir Francis to go into dinner with tonight and he talked to me, instead of me talking to him, he is quite charming, so funny Mother discovered that she was an old, old friend of his. After dinner, Lady Hindlip seized on the Duke again for Bezique at which I should think he was greatly bored. Next morning our party broke up, the Cobham's went first, then Lady Elcho, and then the Duke and his equerries, Papa accompanying them. Bennett took a last photo of him seated in the carriage. (See page 7.) What a week for him, Beauchamp went off next on horseback, he was going to lunch at Leigh, how we all envied him. The Hindlips were the last. I think it was as well we had a quiet day. The dust was awful yesterday and our hair got terribly dirty and coarse feeling. It was great fun hearing the people about criticise the Duke."

After his visit the Duke wrote to the family expressing his thanks for their hospitality and the 9th Earl drafted a reply. From these letters it is evident that Tom, the Coventry's youngest son made quite an impression on the Duke.

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1. Cross was the 9th Earl's second horseman for some 50-60 years.
 2. Falstaff was the hunter who carried the 9th Earl at the Queen Victoria's two jubilees. The only horse, bar that of the Duke of Cambridge's chestnut, to do the two jubilees.
 3. Head Gardener for many years at Croome
 4. Head Coachman at Croome for many years
 5. One of the 9th Earl's tenants at Park Farm. He was much beloved and admired by all the young members of the Coventry family. An ungainly figure in the hunting field, but a very hard rider, and each member of the family had the delight of being piloted to hounds by him.



The Restoration of Croome's Ice House

Ecclesiastical and Heritage World

The practice of building ice houses came to England from France in the seventeenth-century as a means of storing ice for use in the households of the gentry. Croome's ice house, which is located close to the old carriage route leading from the church. A third of the egg shaped brick structure sat above ground with the remaining two thirds hidden underground, which was where the ice, 'skimmed' from a nearby pond, would be stored for use in the kitchens.

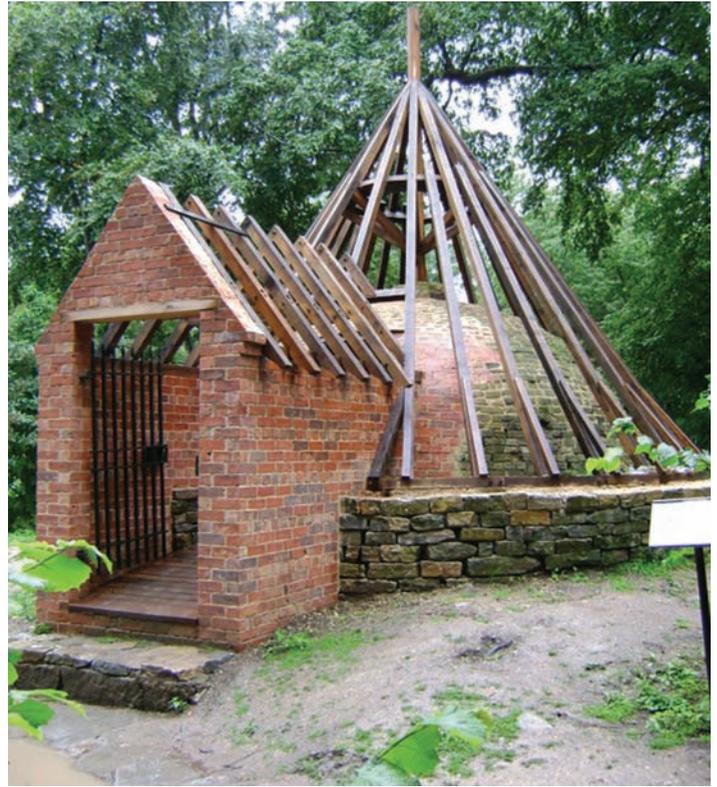
The brick dome was probably originally covered by a tee-pee styled thatched roof, and a short three to four metre long brick and timber passageway would have served as an entrance. Thought to have been originally filled with straw, the passageway was designed to stop the wind and the rain from entering the ice chamber. The surrounding trees would also have helped keep the ice house shaded and cool in summer.

Although kept in reasonably good working order during its working life, the ice house ceased to be used in 1915 and so fell into significant decay, being filled with rubbish after World War II as a safety measure when the court was in use as a school. In 2007 plans were made to restore the ice house back to its original splendour and, with help from a £46,000 grant from Natural England's Countryside Stewardship Scheme plus funding from the National Trust, restoration was completed in September 2009.

The excavation of the ice house was conducted by archaeologists from EAS Ltd, working with Ward & Co. (Building Conservation) Ltd., the main contractors. Architect John Goom, who had considerable experience in the restoration of historic buildings, was appointed to oversee the restoration of the ice house. Fortunately, there was sufficiently good documentary evidence, backed by archaeological findings, in the form of an old article of the 1950s and a black and white photograph taken of the ice house in the 1920s, to give a good indication of how the building would have originally looked.

However, immediate structural repairs were required to ensure that the existing fabric could be retained. A large part of the original brick dome was missing rendering it structurally unstable. This needed to be rebuilt with bricks that exactly matched the originals both in size and appearance and the rest required extensive re-pointing. The missing passageway or porch also needed to be re-built on the basis of archaeological evidence in order to secure the stability of the dome.

Integral to the project was the sourcing of historically authentic handmade bricks that would exactly match the size, tone, texture and character of the existing brickwork. Northcot Brick was approached as one of the few makers of genuine handmade bricks with the extensive restoration



experience, craftsmanship and the specialist brick matching skills required. Their team of master brick makers, who use age-old bench mould techniques that have hardly changed over the centuries and fire in the traditional way in one of the last remaining coal fired kilns, created a new bespoke smooth faced brick, which matched the subtle orange-yellow tones and the weather-worn appearance of the originals.

Once the brickwork of the ice house had been restored, a new oak frame was constructed using photographic and site

based evidence to decide its form and covered with long straw thatch, which is traditionally used in the locality in order to replicate the original appearance of the building.

Thanks to the painstaking restoration and traditional craftsmanship, visitors to Croome can now visit the ice house and go through the new entrance tunnel, up to an iron gate at the dome, and peer down into the depths of this unusual structure in order to fully appreciate its unique history.

