



“Cementing Relations in Southam” **2016 Summer Exhibition**



Southam is a small market town that was originally settled on good agricultural land, but in the 18th century, or maybe even earlier, the discovery of blue lias clay and yellow limestone encouraged the development of a lime burning industry that evolved into one of the best cement production areas in Britain. An industry that is still in evidence on the outskirts of Southam today.

The Best Geology for Cement Making

The quarry at Long Itchington has been designated as a RIGS – a regionally important geological site. A number of geologists have studied the Triassic and Jurassic rocks there, investigating how the layers might have been formed and under what climatic conditions as well as what animal remains are present and studies of the development of some of these fossilised animals have also been made.

The area has obviously been under the sea as there are layers of limestone (fossilised sea life) and clay (mud laid down by different water levels over thousands of years) and the remains of whole sea creatures such as ammonites and gryphaea and the large fossilised skeletons of ichthyosaur have been found.

Ammonites are the fossilised remains of shellfish like squid which lived between 400 million years ago and 65 million years ago. They disappeared at the same time as the dinosaurs and gryphaea are bivalves that had two shells and were known by the Victorians as ‘Devil’s Toenails’ as no one knew at that time what they could be. They come from the Upper Triassic to the Upper Jurassic times which were between 140 million years ago and 22 million years ago.



The Stockton Ichthyosaurus

In 1898 a large fossil of an Ichthyosaurus platyodon was found in the lower lias clay by the quarry workers for Greaves, Bull and Lakin. It was fully reported in the Leamington Spa Courier, Saturday, 13 August 1898 and the fossil is now at the Natural History Museum in London. In recent years an image of an Ichthyosaurus has been used on the sign at the entrance to Stockton village

“The lime quarries are situated about 2 miles from Southam on the road to Dunchurch and are entered by a gate on the left hand where the road to Long Ichington to Stockton and Napton crosses.



When first entering the field there is little to show that anything unusual is taking place, but a walk 200 yards brings us to the edge of the quarry, where a crane is busily at work removing the lias to the surface. Trestle-work bridges intersect the intervening spaces, which have been dug out to enable the quarrymen to convey, by means of barrows, the lias from the opposite side and also to deposit the debris.

It was on one of the platforms, 20 feet from the surface and reached by ladder, that the fish lizard was discovered lying with its head due north. The tip of its tail was first brought to light and the quarrymen noticing that this was in good preservation took unusual precautions in unbedding the remainder.”

<i>Head:</i>	<i>4 feet x 2 feet 5 ins</i>	
<i>Body:</i>	<i>5 feet x 2 feet 3 ins at the fore paddles</i>	<i>1 foot 5 ins at the base</i>
<i>Fore paddles:</i>	<i>2 feet 3 ins long</i>	<i>Hind paddles: 2 feet 3 ins long</i>
<i>Tail length:</i>	<i>10 feet 2 ins</i>	<i>Total length: 19 feet 2 ins</i>

Source Leamington Courier 13 August 1898

The Harbury Ichthyosaurus



In December 1927 at the Harbury works of Greaves, Bull and Lakin, a complete skeleton of an 18 ft long Plesiosaur was uncovered and a year later in November 1928 they uncovered a 33 ft long Ichthyosaur. Both were sent to the Natural History Museum in London.

“Mr W S Swinton of the geological department of the British Museum travelled to Harbury on Monday to see a fossil (ichthyosaurus platydon) found in a new quarry at the works of Messers Greaves, Bull and Lakin.

In an interview, he said it was a fossil reptile of the same type as that found at Stockton in 1898, but was much larger. It was unusual, said Mr Swinton, to find one of these marine reptiles in such a good state of preservation. The ichthyosaurus was a marine reptile and lived on fish. It laid eggs, but the fact that some of the young were born alive in the sea showed they were independent of land.

It was important, added Mr Swinton, that discoveries like this should be reported at once to the British Museum. Formerly they had many vertebrate fossils reported, but with the mechanical appliances now in use, it was difficult to prevent these fossils being made into cement.”

It was found about 300 yards from where the earlier fossil had been found in December 1927, but at a shallower depth of 20 feet down.

<i>Head:</i>	<i>1 foot long though damaged</i>	<i>Body:</i>	<i>6 feet long with 5 feet wide fins</i>
<i>Tail length:</i>	<i>26 feet</i>		

Source: Tamworth Herald 24 November 1928

William Griffin

In the early days there were at least nine small and individually owned works around Southam and they were all owned or tenanted by small farmers such as William Griffin.

William Griffin (1791 -1861), who ran a lime and cement works at Stockton, was a tenant farmer of mixed arable land and pasture at Stockton Fields. His family had been farmers in Fenny Compton before 1660 and had moved via Farnborough and Avon Dassett to Stockton in the early 19th century.

In 1841 this notice was posted with the address as ‘Stockton new Blue Lime Stone Quarry’
‘The undersigned is desirous of extending the use of the finest lime to be procured in England, and accordingly will be happy to supply the lime stone or pure well burnt lime to any persons for building or agricultural purposes, and will contract for delivering the same in boats, at any wharf or place on the different canals with which the Warwick & Napton communicates. There will always be a supply of the finest burnt blue stone lime, or lime stone, ready at the wharf on the canal, to be loaded on boats passing, without trouble or delay. Applications to be made to me at the Farm House or to the Foreman at the lime works.’
William Griffin.’

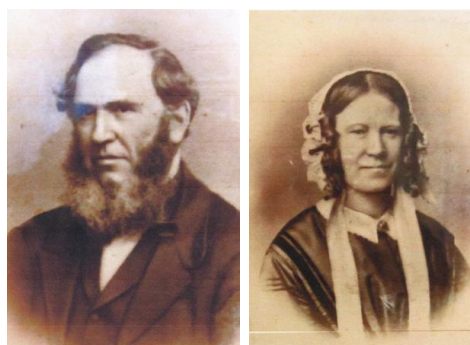
Later in 1844 after the death of the landowner, Captain Lamb, the 168 acres of farm land which William had held on lease were put up for sale with 17 acres which included the lime kilns and quarry. The sale handbill and accompanying map printed in London and advertised in the London Times, showed that the area excavated covered about two acres, through which ran a tram road down to three lime kilns by the canal. There was ‘a small building used as a storehouse, standing near the works’.

Sources: Frearson & Bartlett

William Oldham

William Oldham owned the farmland where Kaye’s cement works eventually stood. Born about 1816, he had begun production of lime and then ‘Roman cement’ from the clay and stone on his land in the 1850’s. His father, Thomas, was a Southam man before him, and his grandfather Henry was one of the Southam voters and was living in Birdingbury in 1836.

William and his family lived next door to the Olde Mint at no.1, (now no. 50) Coventry Street, Southam in the building which, in 2016, is called Arundel House.



Coventry Street abt 1890

The house was one of the earliest to be rendered in cement and dates from the 17th century. In the roof space there are some old timbers still in place that suggest it may have once been thatched and a much smaller building, but it escaped the devastating fire of Southam in 1741.

It is now a grade 2 listed building.

Southam Rural District Council had their offices in Arundel House before it was bought by the Hill family in 1954, from where they ran their coal business until it was sold in 1997. Mike Hill remembers the

servant's bells with their control wires still in place and a hand operated water pump in the kitchen which pumped water from a sunken tank that collected the soft rainwater from the roof. There were also three water wells, but now filled in.

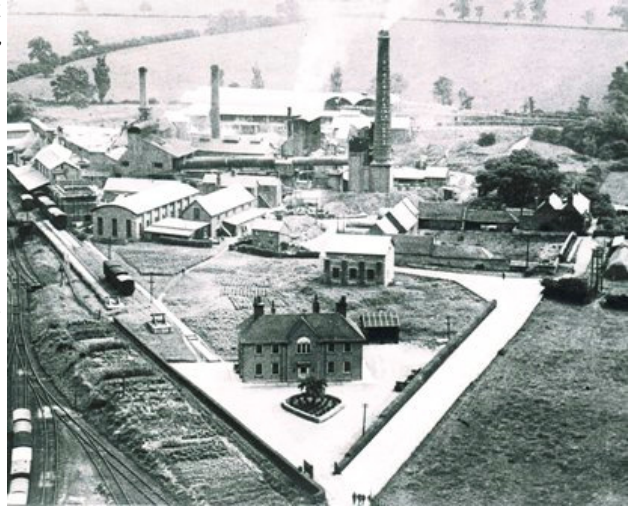
Only the front was cement rendered and the original bricks are still clean at the rear, and although the front roof is of slate, the rear is tiles.

Captain Arthur Lister -Kaye

Thomas William Oldham crops up early in a document in Rugby Cement archives in 1831: '*Agreement for Lease of Lime Rock at Long Itchington J H Anthony to Messrs T W Oldham and W & C Witherington.*' The Witherington brothers lived at Cuttle Farm, by the canal near Long Itchington.

From about 1854, William Oldham was in partnership with Lawrence Mallory Tatham, a London lime and cement merchant trading with Capt. Arthur Lister-Kaye, and who acted as agents for 'Greaves and Kirshaw'.

In 1868 Oldham retired and the quarries were leased to



'Tatham, Kaye & Co' at a yearly rental of £515.

About 1875 Tatham retired and Lister- Kaye continued the business as 'Kaye & Co' until 1880, when a limited company was formed and the works purchased from the Oldham family.

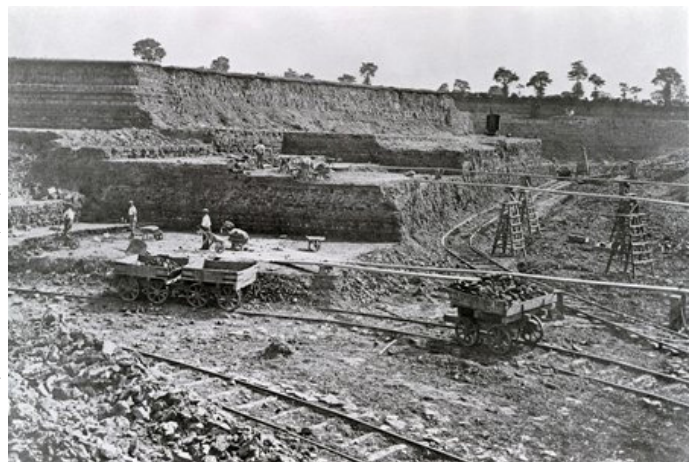
Kaye & Co Ltd became one of the major works and was situated on the Long Itchington/ Stockton side of town, having taken advantage of the nearby Warwick and Napton Canal via the Kaye's Arm and the branch line of the London and North Western Railway joining Weedon and Leamington Spa. This early transport

system allowed the easy importation of coal and export of the finished cement product before they later made use of the extensive 20th century road transport system.

Richard Greaves

One of the earliest cement manufacturers was Richard Greaves of Stratford-on-Avon who inherited land at Stockton from his father-in-law and was in partnership with J W Kirshaw of Warwick as 'Greaves & Kirshaw'.

He married Catherine, daughter of Samuel Holland of the Welsh slate industry, but had no children. His wife was a cousin of the well known authoress,



Mrs. Gaskell. He had two brothers; a solicitor and MP for Warwick and the other established a slate business at Portmadoc, Caernarvonshire and whose slate mine was once the second largest in the world.

Near Harbury in 1820, Richard Greaves established another Lime and Cement Works, which in later years relied on the Great Western Railway for transport.

In the 1860s the Greaves partnership was joined by John Coulson Bull, and became Greaves, Kirshaw & Bull. Within a few years Kirshaw had retired and in 1870 Greaves died. On the death of Richard Greaves, his nephew, Michael Henry Lakin, became a partner.

The Kirshaw name was dropped and sometime between 1872 - 1876 the business became 'Greaves, Bull & Lakin' and Harbury became their main works and when J C Bull died in 1885, Michael Lakin was joined by his brother, Edward.

Allied Cement Manufacturers, makers of Red Triangle Cement, bought the Harbury works in 1927, but went bankrupt in 1931, when Associated Portland Cement bought them out. Later they became part of the Blue Circle Industries and the works closed completely in the 1970s.

Charles Nelson

George Nelson of Warwick was a timber merchant and a chemist, and during the 1830s he began the manufacture of gelatine and other meat extracts. In 1844 he started producing lime and was listed in 1856 as a 'manufacturer of Portland Cement of Warwick' and by 1860 at Stockton.

The Nelson cement and lime works history is '*... closely associated with that of George Nelson, Dale & Co of Warwick, gelatine and isinglass manufacturers whose business is now part of the Davis Gelatine Group since lime is used in the manufacture of gelatine*'



George Nelson died in 1850, and his two works were supervised by relatives until 1856 when his eldest son, Charles, now aged 22, took control of the lime works and introduced the manufacture of cement. He now traded as 'Charles Nelson & Co' and Charles's younger brothers assumed control of the gelatine business.



In 1868 Charles Nelson was living at The Fields, Southam

In 1877, aged only 43, Charles Nelson died of Bright's Disease (kidney disease and high blood pressure) at his home at Crackley Hill House, Kenilworth, leaving a widow and ten children. On 1 January 1880, his brothers George Henry Nelson and Edward Montague Nelson, with Thomas Philip Blyth and William Widger Blackstone formed a Partnership to carry

on the business. They would later convert it to a company with shares and it continued to trade well into the middle 20th century when they were taken over by Rugby Portland Cement.

Canal Transport

The Warwick and Napton Canal opened in 1800 opening up a transport route between Birmingham and London which was very useful for transporting coal to the lime works.

An arm off this canal, which ran only half a mile away from the Southam works, was made, probably



in 1819 and it became known as Kaye's Arm. It was built by John Tomes, Chairman of the Warwick & Napton Canal Company, and Charles Handley, the Chief Engineer, who had formed a partnership to exploit the local limestone deposits. John was a brother of Edward Tomes a prominent solicitor of Southam.

The narrowboats or 'monkeyboats' using the canal carried between 25 and 30 tons each, normally in not more than twos, owing to the difficulty in passing locks. Average speeds attained by one horse were 2mph for one boat and 1½mph for two linked boats; Thus on Monday, March 15th 1869, when steerer Cox was on the way back from Oakthorpe Colliery near

Ashby de la Zouch, he wrote to his employer (all in one breath):

"Mr Griffin Sir i Write to inform you that i have being at the Oakthorp pets 10 Days Waiting for the Slake [small coal] but i ham loaded now and on my way home i Shall be at home about the medel of the day on Wensday i ham Sir your Obeante Sur[v]ent Henry Cox"

By all accounts the canal was a slow but sure way of moving Griffin lime and cement, at least as far as may be judged from evidence afforded by the 1849-54 ledger. In the case of just one customer, of 6 South Wharf, Paddington, we read, for 1854:

"Apr 1 (deducted) 'for damaged lime 2s.6d' (a mere 5 cwt), and again, following the June entries, 'Spoilt Lime... 10 tons ... 17/6: £8.15s.'"

As the lime was being sold in this case at 10s a ton, it may be that the customer was paying another 17s.6d for canal tolls and haulage, and when William made good the damaged lime he had to foot the bill.



It was of course to both the buyer's and seller's advantage if the boats were loaded both ways. In 1867 a customer wrote from 'Measham, near Atherstone, Derbyshire' (near Oakthorpe):

"Mr Griffin Sir will you Pleas to give me an order fore 2 Loads of Slack as We Want 2 Loades of Lime Stone and we have not got heney orders in Pleas to send word by Return of Post and Pleas to Enclose me the order and then I will Settle the Remainder of that a count From your Humble Survant John Bird."

Large amounts of slack would be needed for lime burning, or perhaps also to fuel a steam engine to

grind the stone: a contemporary business card for 'Griffin's Blue Lias Lime Works' offers 'Lump Lime, per Ton' and 'Ground Lime, per Ton.'

The June 1866 bill from the Warwick & Napton Canal Company shows that 172 tons of Griffin's lime were carried on the canal during the month, in six loads of between 28 and 30 tons, as well as 108 tons of coal, in two presumably double boatloads of 54 tons each. Henry Cox's name appears again here, with those of boatmen Wilson, Brooks, Wright and Coles.

Locomotives

The trams were first pulled by horses and then in 1903 a steam engine was acquired. It was made by Peckett & Sons, (0-6-OST W/No.1008) and later named 'Jurassic' after the geological era of much of the excavated stone, the same name as the third Nelson's locomotive.

Jurassic is now with the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway being restored to steam for 2017.

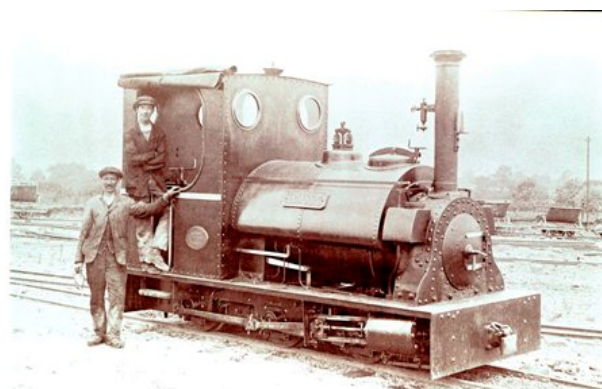
- *Earlier locomotives cost £400 and £470.*
- *Twenty wagons cost £130 from Koppel and 70 wagons were bought from Howards for £560.*
- *Four thousand sleepers cost only £67 and two sets of points were £200.*
- *Eight turntables were £50.*

By 1923 five more engines had been bought from Peckett & Sons. The last three were larger by 6 inches with bigger cabs, but otherwise remained much the same.

In 1918 a second-hand petrol-driven locomotive was acquired and in 1920 a new 20 horsepower petrol Motor Rail machine was bought. Another second-hand one arrived in 1936 and at various times there

were five diesel powered engines which were known locally as 'diesel dinkums'. They were used to shift coal to the larger locomotives and steam driven cranes and a gang of four platelayers also travelled on these.

On their acquisition of Nelsons, Rugby used some of their scrapped parts for spares for the Southam lo-



comotives. Southam ceased running locomotives on 20 October 1956; the locomotives were either broken up or disposed of.

After the Rugby Cement Company took over the works in the 1930's a standard gauge diesel shunter was used called 'Southam'. 'Southam No.2' arrived later. *Source: David Gunby / John Frearson*

Kaye locos distinguished by their Cast Nameplates

Date Purchased	Works Number	Name	June 1940	Later History
1903	1008	'Jurassic'	Spare loco	To Lincs Coast Railway 1961
1906	1119	'Neozoic'		Broken up in 1943
1909	1216	'Liassic'		Broken up in 1943
1911	1270	'Triassic'	In use	To J B Latham At Bala Lake Railway
1913	1327	'Mesozoic'	In use	Various, was Llanberis; now Bromyard & Linton Light Railway
1923	1632	<i>Vicozoic</i> (after its driver!) later given the plate from 'Liassic'	In use	To Canada in 1959

1 *Triassic* was the first industrial loco bought for private preservation in 1957 by the late J. B. Latham. It is now owned by Bryce Latham who has reached an agreement with the Bala Lake Railway to enable a full 'heavy' overhaul of the locomotive to take place. It is hoped that *Triassic* will be fully restored to working condition in the future. *Jurassic* is now under full restoration to steam.

The wheelbarrow, pick, sledge hammer and shovel were once the quarryman's tools and horses originally pulled the trucks along the rails. Holes were manually 'dug' to put the dynamite in to break up the rock.

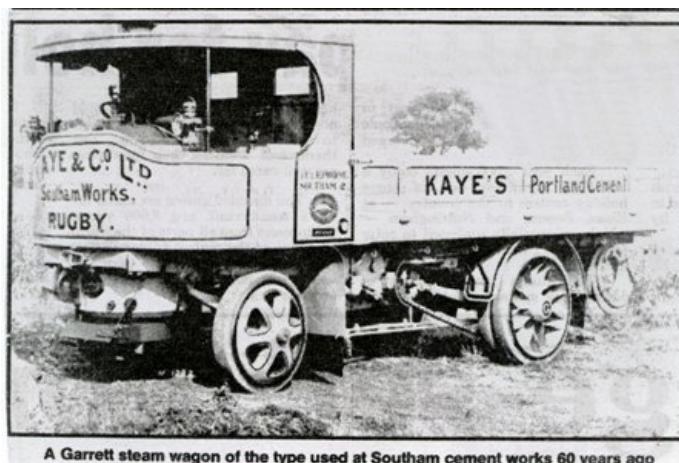
Gradually the locomotives replaced the horses and the steam shovel replaced the men.

A steam shovel was a large steam-powered machine that was able to move the limestone and soil replacing many of the men, and this was only the start of mechanisation of the quarries.

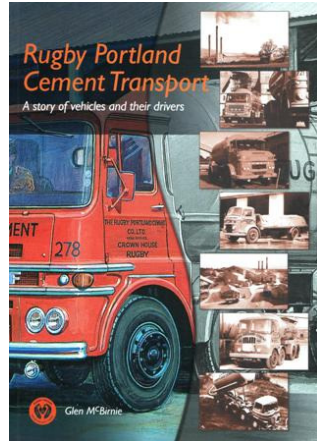


Road Transport

In 1982 Glen McBirnie, a retired HGV driver, applied for permission to collect material relating to Rugby Portland Cement transport and after 20 years in 2002, he published his story of these vehicles and their drivers. Although it only relates to this one company, the story will resonate far wider and touch the lives of many other Southam people and there will be similar stories behind the other cement works around Southam.



A Garrett steam wagon of the type used at Southam cement works 60 years ago



Sports

Each cement works was competitive in a range of sports and played both inter-works and between works.

In 1920/21 the Kayes Tug of War Challenge Cup was won by the team from Greaves, Bull and Lakin Harbury Works.



Back Row:
A Taylor R Gubbins G Cowley
A Cowley A Baldwin F Townsend

Front Row:
A S Pritchard W Boyles Mr
H G Lakin R Walker (Coach)

The Rugby Portland Southam Cricket team played on a field behind Model Village and not always in full whites. In 1951 a young Bob Gaskins played with his team against the Rugby Headquarters and some years later in 1960, his captain Alec Haynes and Ron Lockley, were still playing for the team.



Back Row: (left to right)
Bob Gaskins Les Rathbone
Norman Plummer Art Washbrook
Ron Lockley Shad Markham
Arth Cox Mrs Haynes
Miss Haynes Jean Bolton
 Front Row: (left to right)
Les Elsom Bert Facer Cyril Green
Jack Terrington Ken Williams
 Sat at the front:
Alec Haynes

BACK ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT)

UNKNOWN
SID SMITH
GEORGE GARDNER
SAM HODGES
DAVID BIDDLE
HORACE GREEN
UNKNOWN

FRONT ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT)

DAVID CLEAVER
STAN WORRALL
ALEC HAYNES
RON LOCKLEY
RICHARD POWELL
JOHN GARDNER.



Blue Circle provided first class leisure and sporting facilities with a licensed pavilion, a cricket pitch, tennis courts and bowling greens. The field was set aside for one day each summer when the company hosted a Family Day for all, when there were the usual races, competitions and prize giving.

And as many workmen in the quarries were members of the Workers Union, the annual donkey races, like this one in 1924, were always well supported.

Kaye's Works Strike 1912



One of the earliest strikes in the cement industry lasted only a few weeks and happened at Kaye's works in 1912. A worker there said that it was triggered by the sacking of a quarryman for loading dirt into a truck along with the stone, but the son of the former manager reported that it was thought that it was really because the new quarrying machine, called a mechanical navvy, had replaced some of the workers.

The Leamington Courier reported:

"The whole of the quarrymen engaged at Kaye's Lime & Cement Works, situated in Long Itchington parish, struck work and were paid off last Friday. Some 63 men are involved, but only 8 of these reside in Long Itchington, the rest mostly belonging to Stockton and Southam."



"The dispute arose over a question of wages - which range from 10d to 1s 8d per ton for stone excavated according to position in the quarry. It appears the 'bottom men' or men working on the lower station, asked for 2d a ton rise, and the 'top men' or men working near the surface were at the same time threatened with a reduction of 2d per ton."

"Mr Lister Kaye informed our Southam correspondence that he was not unduly inconvenienced by the strike, as the carpenters, bricklay-



ers, etc, on the works had been most loyal and had taken the pitmen's places in the quarries."

"The strike ended yesterday (Thursday) morning. The masters and men met by appointment at the works and speedily adjusted their differences. All the quarry men, except those engaged at other works, are therefore back at their usual posts. Great satisfaction is everywhere expressed at this speedy and satisfactory termination of the dispute."

Source the Leamington Courier 23 Feb 1912

Nelson's Works Strike 1924

Albert John Hodges JP (Appendix Street, Southam) Trade Union leader for the district reported the following were the Southam district cement work's wages:

	<i>Quarry Rates</i>	<i>Works Rates</i>
<i>Kaye & Co</i>	<i>11½ d per hr</i>	<i>10½ d per hr</i>
<i>Greaves, Bull & Lakin</i>	<i>11¼ d per hr</i>	<i>10¾ d per hr</i>
<i>C Nelson & Co</i>	<i>10¾ d per hr</i>	<i>9¾ d per hr</i>

"Charles Nelson & Co claim they pay a bonus of 8½ d per week per man.

There are bonus schemes in operation at the other firms in the district; Messers Kaye & Co and Greaves, Bull & Lakin The average bonus at those quarries is over 5s per week per man during the same period."

Source the Warwickshire Standard 22 Aug 1924

Ashby's Warwickshire 1890

Joseph Ashby in the early 1880s wrote a series of articles on the Warwickshire villages he visited and the quarry villages have specific mentions to the living style of quarry families.

"Southam is one of the oldest market towns in Warwickshire and one can almost hear the rattle of stage-coach wheels on the pebbles outside the hotels. The land and property belong to many owners and the labour of the people depends almost exclusively upon agriculture and the neighbouring lime works situated in the parishes of Bishops Itchington, Long Itch-

ington and Stockton.



There is a Reading Room with an unusual arrangement of particular places set apart for the richer people, the tradesmen and the labourers. Upon asking, "Does not this arrangement have an undesirable effect upon membership of the institution?" I receive the answer "There are not many who attend."

Thrift perhaps excels as it counts amongst its established institutions, a very numerous Lodge of Oddfellows; a prosperous building society and a very extensive Co-operative Society.

I was standing on the raised causeway on Market Hill when the juveniles of Southam returned from their annual pic-nic at Stoneleigh (or Kenilworth) with some senior Oddfellows at a decidedly late hour. The outing had wearied them more than the boys, but they had all enjoyed it.

One of the most imposing business premises are those of the Southam Co-operative Industrial Society in High Street. They have bravely struggled for a considerable number of years, but in 1883 the claims of members amounted to £486-14s and they had 221 members in 1891.

There are 11 public houses, which is quite out of proportion to the size of the town. "Is there much drunkenness?" I queried. "Not as much as there used to be." "But is there much?" "Well, there's a good bit of drinking."



Southam occupies 271 acres of land as well cultivated allotments and nearly every road or path approaching town is hedged by growing crops of allotment corn. In connection with allotments, the Southam Pig Club has been established for 14 years with 92 members.

Stockton 1890

"There is little to distinguish Stockton from other villages, except its social and political struggles and it is perhaps less picturesque than the average village. During a working day there is little sign of life other than a child playing on the green roadside verges.

The first impression of the village as you approach from the Southam to Rugby road, is one of comfort and prosperity for the whole of the village, appear-





ing bright and with small patches of garden, but it soon changes.

The narrow streets are sombre and dirty, but it is hoped the poor houses will soon be replaced by better. They have a very low roof, small windows, brick floors and wretchedly arranged and inconvenient hearths. Their older occupants, not working in the fields or quarry, are stooped and poorly clad, worn with ill-requited labour, scrubbing floors or screaming at young children to keep out of their way.

There are a considerable number of new cottages built by the Lime Burning Company of Nelson & Co. These are of the usual size and manner of modern cottages, but their great fault is that they are placed too near each other. In the case of many they are placed in a long row which must be a most objectionable feature in the erection of new cottages.

“I dare say your rents are rather high,” I venture to say.

“Ah, so they be, master, but we shouldn’t mind about that, but it’s the rates.”

The rents paid in Stockton are very considerable. For the worst of them as much as 2 shillings per week is paid. The best, built by Nelson & Co for their workers, are let at 3 shillings a week on a weekly tenancy. The rent is stopped out of their wages and they can be turned out of their cottage with only a week’s notice. This also means that being turned out from employment will mean being turned out from their home.



Needless to say the village owes the greatest proportion of its prosperity to the lime works which finds employment for the majority of the men. These works have been developing for the last 50 years and take the best men in the district. Indeed Stockton has increased in size in the last 40 years at a far greater rate than any other village in the south-eastern part of Warwickshire.

The lime workers have a Club on the works to which they contribute 3 pence per week, receiving from funds 10 shillings per week during sickness. The co-operative trading movement is also more successful here than in other villages, because of the regular employment at the lime works.” (Nelson’s Club)

Bishops Itchington 1890

“The Lime Works of Messers Greaves, Bull and Lakin employ upward of 200 men in the village in various stages of work necessary for lime burning. The work is not suitable for nervous or lazy men and is much the same as that of navvies in the construction of the new railway lines. Their only advantage to the navvies is on the side of the proprietors of the lime works.

Needless to say the quarry work is dangerous and chiefly so in the long “barrow runs”. Imagine for yourself running heavily loaded barrows over a plank road 30 to 40 yards long over a yawning depth of anything between 20 and 30 feet. Fortunately the scaffolding is sound and strong and the general safety of the men fairly well looked after by the proprietors and their managers. The men’s chief com-

plaint is they have to raise these scaffold runs themselves.



At the kilns the work seems less exhausting, except for the heat and the dust and always there is the background noise of the rattle and hum of machinery. However the men seem to prefer this work to that of the fields and farms; although one wonders why! Perhaps it is a combination of the strong social element between the men in the quarries, which is absent in the often more isolated farm work, as well as the increased wages. Lads therefore leave the farms for the quarries as soon as they are strong enough for lighter work.

Here the men work by the piece or square yard and although one of the managers expressed the opinion it was about £1 per week, one of the gangs estimated their earnings as 18 shillings a week, but still better than the agricultural wage of 13-15 shillings a week.

Women labour is now rarely employed on the farms, except during haymaking and harvest and more so in the villages employed in the lime works, which is a blessing for them as they need less to increase their husband's wage.

It is difficult to imagine the wretched condition of an agricultural labourer's home whose wife has to work out in the fields as well, whatever the weather or time of year.

For her to be at work for 8am and out until 5pm and unable to prepare meals and look after the home and unfortunate children makes for a wretched life for the women. The older children should be at school, but many play truant or babies are left in charge of the eldest girls who may be little more than 8 years of age, all to provide the family with enough money to increase the husband's wage sufficiently to cover the essential rent and food, let alone any unexpected expense.



Like Stockton, the prosperity of Bishops Itchington relies on the limes works and its associated trades.”

Long Itchington 1890

“Long Itchington is a large and important village on the main road between Southam and Coventry and not far from Marton railway station. An omnibus passes through the village to the station several times a day.



It is a greatly scattered village, somewhat picturesque and although not controlled by the oppression of a single Manor and master, is perhaps in need of one for much repair.

The houses are largely of the old thatched type and have been built for many years, perhaps too

many and are in a wretched condition. It is painful to notice how the families of working men are trying to keep up the appearance of decency and comfort with roofs and floors in such a deplorably ill state of repair.



Many of the cottages are only two rooms, one upstairs and one down and occupants have gone to great lengths to make them as decent and as comfortable as they can. As a rule, the one bedroom for a family is divided into sections by curtains fastened to nails in the bedposts or driven in the walls and the beds are arranged as distant from each other as possible.

Boxes containing clothes and linen are piled one on the other in a convenient corner or



tightly packed in linen bags and hung behind the door or on any projecting beam. These beams are often rough hewn and impossible to whitewash, but also serve the purpose of useful shelves when all necessary furniture has to be minimal. All the family from necessity wash in one bowl in a windowless 'pantry' downstairs.

The room upstairs may also be their only store room and as well as clothes and linen, the space under the beds is often utilised for storing potatoes and even onions, during the winter months.

The rent of these cottages compared with other villages, taking into consideration the very poor conditions, is high, the very cheapest being 1s 3d a week, yet they would not be worth more than £25 if sold. Indeed, the Rural Sanitary Authority of Southam could compel some owners to renovate them! So why is no one doing anything about them, be it church or politics?

One cottage described in the local paper had walls of wattle and daub that were falling down, a thatch roof with holes which let in the rain and a bedroom floor dangerous and anyone likely to fall through at any time. The bedroom walls are black and dirty and the downstairs walls are patched with brown paper and partially whitewashed, and yet eight persons live in this cottage!"

A Labourer's Notes

Old village cottages were often no more than 2 up and 2 down and with families of up to 12 children, sleeping was cramped using all rooms and often divided by curtains upstairs. Children often lived with relatives who had some space, such as grandparents.

House rent in Long Itchington (c1890) started at 1s 3d a week and in Stockton from 2s (10 new pence) a week, and up to 3s for the newer and bigger cement works houses.

Cottages were often tied to the job; so inhabitants would only have a week to move out if they lost their job. A double hit!!!

Bishops Itchington (c1890) lime and cement workers earned up to a £1 a week compared with the local agricultural wages of 13-15s a week. (About 65 to 75 new pence.)



A lime and cement worker earned from 10d to 1s 8d per ton of stone excavated (1912) and rates were between 9¾d and 11½d per hour (1924) (Less than a shilling – 5 new pence – an hour.)

At Stockton, 3p a week was paid into an insurance club.



Unless severely injured, they walked to the doctors; usually Dr Lattey in Southam and Dr Pirie in Harbury. A wagon would take them to Warneford Hospital if required. Bodies were taken to the public houses for an inquest; such as the Barley Mow Inn in Stockton and the Butcher's Arms in Bishops Itchington.

Men walked to work, or in later years bicycled. For the night shift at Harbury Works - labourers left their houses to walk about 5.15 in time for a 6pm start. Often a 12 hour shift.

Edward Gardner's Accident 1938

Source Linda Dodd

This accident was one of many throughout the different cement works. Linda's father, Edward George Gardner, at the age of 30 years in 1938, suffered a traumatic accident at the Nelsons Cement Works which resulted in the loss of his lower right leg. After a period of convalescence he was fitted with an artificial leg and continued to work for Nelsons until they closed. He then obtained employment at the Blue Circle Cement Works at Harbury and he used to cycle the six miles to work each day with his artificial leg.

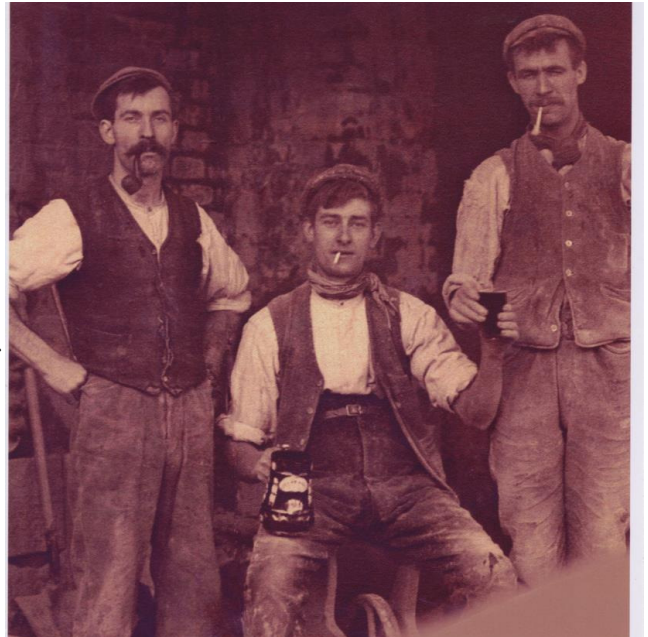
In a Cement warehouse was a corkscrew cement conveyor running in a trough under the floor, about 12 inches in diameter and power driven travelling at 75 revolutions per minute. Anything in the conveyor either travelled with it or was mangled. It was fenced at certain points and at others a plate over it allowed access to the machinery when necessary, but at one point there were bars over it for extra access as there had been some problems. This was usually fully covered by a lid, which had been removed to work on the screw and someone had then thrown a sack over the bars to prevent cement dust rising.

On August 26th Edward had been engaged in stacking gypsum in this warehouse where he was not usually employed and was not aware of the open conveyor beneath the sacking. While working, he stepped backwards to allow a trolley to pass and in doing so put his foot through the sacking and be-

tween the bars into the conveyer and his leg was trapped.

Nelsons provided full treatment for Edward, but it still resulted in his leg being amputated just below the knee. At Southam Petty Sessions Charles Nelson & Co Ltd cement manufacturers of Stockton were fined £25 and 13s.6d (67½p) special costs.

Edward George Gardner was the eldest child of **George** and **Margaret Gardner**, who was born at Stockton and grew up there. His father **George Gardner**, (the man on the left in the photograph) also born at Stockton, had been a lime and cement burner at Nelsons Works, and his father had also worked there before him.



However, **George** was brought up by his step-father, **Thomas Bloxham** from the age of 8 years old. **Thomas** had also worked at Nelsons, but as an engine driver.

Harbury Explosion

Source Oscar and Gillian Jayes

In the late 1950s, just two days before Christmas, Gillian Jayes' (Eaton) family were involved in an explosion at the Harbury Cement Works.

Her uncle, Eric Eaton was driving a bulldozer that day and three men from Leamington Spa were painting the outside of a slurry tank in the middle of the site. These tanks were made of concrete and an activator worked inside stirring the slurry.

The slurry tank cracked open and out exploded the slurry. One man died and the other two were injured and it was due to Eric's quick thinking that the casualties were not worse. It took all night to clear up and Chris Jerome, one of our Heritage Collection members, remembers as a child her father didn't come home that night.

William Henry Lake

Source Bill and Alan Griffin

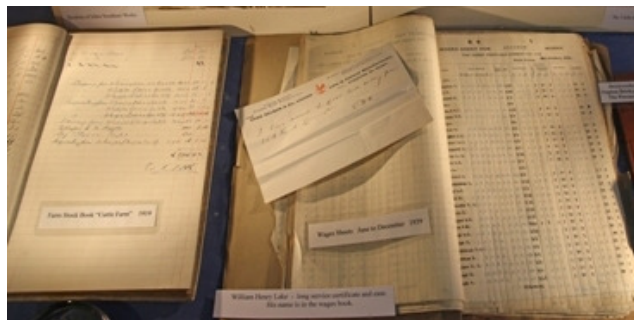


William Henry Lake is Bill and Alan Griffin's grandfather who was born in 1889 in Souldern, Oxfordshire. His extended family were agricultural labourers and lace makers all born and living in Souldern prior to 1900, but by WW1 William's siblings and cousins were all leaving the village and agriculture to get married or work in trades elsewhere.

William was a soldier in the Machine Gun Corps and the Royal Berkshire Regiment during WW1 and settled at Long Itchington after the war with his wife Edith.

He was the Yard Foreman for Kayes Southam Works and lived in the old farmhouse that pre-dated the works. Bill and Alan's mother was born there along with her three sisters and they all lived there until they were married.

William's name is on the wages book that was in the display cabinet and his certificate in the red case alongside.



19th C Nelsons Works Accidents

In 1873 a serious accident happened to one young man, Thomas Umbers of Southam, who was occupied in doing something at the bottom of a pit when a quantity of stone was tipped over him from above. He sustained dangerous injuries and was unconscious for a long time, but did recover consciousness and progressed well.

In 1874 when Richard Large was working on the 'barrow runs' and they needed some alternations, he did this himself and didn't make them sufficiently secure, resulting on them dislodging completely and he fell the many yards down into the pit to his death. Sadly he left a wife and a family of very young children.

In 1888 the coroner attended the inquest of Richard Cleaver at the Barley Mow Inn, Stockton. He had been at work removing stone from the bottom of a pit and about 42 feet overhead ran a plank (barrow run) upon which stone was being wheeled, and tipped down for him to remove. William Taylor went along with a wheelbarrow load, and according to custom, shouted 'Look out' Cleaver repeated the caution to another named Owen Russell, who got out of the way, but the deceased stopped to pick up another stone, and Taylor, not seeing him tipped the load, and it fell on him striking on the head and back. He was taken home, where he was attended to by Dr. Holmes, of Southam, but he never spoke again, and died on the Saturday morning. He left a wife and three children.

Kayes Works Accidents

In 1901 Edwin Beasley broke a rib and his wrist.

In 1902 Thomas Powell sprained his back when lifting a wooden trestle (but walked home) and on 16 April, a lump of clay weighing about 4lbs and loosened by rain, fell about 15 feet from the face of the quarry, striking H Pratt in the middle of his back. He sustained a severe bruise, but walked the two miles to the doctor's at Southam.

In 1902 Harry (Henry) Best was wheeling a barrow loaded with clay along a 'barrow run' 4ft 3ins wide and fell off on to a concrete floor 11ft below. He surmised he tripped and sustained severe bruises on his forehead and neck.

In 1904 a mechanic named John Cooke was bringing in an iron tip wagon from the quarries to the works and had just descended an incline, at the foot of which were points. He was riding on the back of the wagon and thought the wagon would open the points, but it did not and jumped off the rails, causing him to fall and his leg got caught on the coupling hook, which went into his leg by the shin bone. The accident was not severe and said to be brought about by the man's carelessness!

In 1905 William Brain lost the end of his finger while erecting machinery with Messers T & J Clements, William Gaskins and Mark Askew and he couldn't have a Doctor's Certificate until the doctor knew who was going to pay for it

We have barely touched on the history behind the whole range of Southam Cement Works.

The following links will provide further reading and contacts:

John Frearson: He has a list of names and documents held in the Warwickshire Record Office archives: He has a selection of local history talks: He has two books available one on each of the Kaye's Works and the Nelson's Works.

johnphfrearson@btinternet.com or phone: (Rugby) 01788 579 976

Simon Bartlett: - The Griffin Blue Lias Works History (pdf) on the internet
<http://freepages.history.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~simba/stockton/downloads/griffinsblueliasworkshistory.pdf>

Robert Sherriff: - On our web site.

<http://www.southamheritage.org/2016/07/12/southam-cement-industry-a-brief-history/>

Stockton Parish: - <http://www.stockton-warks-pc.gov.uk/stockton-2079.cfm>

Photographs: - <https://www.flickr.com/photos/7368063@N06/sets/72157629748522887/>

Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway - Jurassic locomotive

<http://www.lincolnshire-coast-light-railway.co.uk/>

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