

A History of the “Kicking Cuddy” (The Clarence Villa)

The Kicking Cuddy, Coxhoe, Durham, previously the Clarence Villa Hotel, re-opened in November 2013 with its original name: The Clarence Villa. What follows is an attempt to piece together a history of that building. There are several unanswered questions, and the words “probably” and “possibly” appear rather often. While this is regretted, it was felt to be worth publishing what was known, with all the gaps and uncertainties, rather than say nothing. It might help build a more complete picture for future reference.

Any information that visitors to this website can give, to help fill the gaps, would be greatly appreciated. In particular, reference to records of the building’s ownership, over the years, would be most welcome. So too would be more details about any of the former licensees.

When was Clarence Villa built?

Summary: Clarence Villa may have been built between 1851 and 1857, when that name is first known to have been recorded... but it could have been between 1835 and 1839.

The area that now includes The Clarence Villa, Clarence Villa Service Station, Clarence Street [Coxhoe] was once part of Park Hill farm, as were fields beyond it, to the South West and, presumably, the triangular field north of Four Mile Bridge. On a valuation plan dated 1835, the one acre plot was part of a 5.775 acres (5a 2r 11p) field on that farm.

However by 1839 the site was separate, had a different owner (or, rather, lessee from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners) and contained a building. On plot no. 131 on that year’s Tithe Map, the house appears to be slightly south of the inn’s later location. However this is almost certainly due to poor surveying. The map is not entirely to scale. Moreover the triangular field to the south still (in 2014) shows clear signs of mediaeval ridge & furrow farming, virtually all the way to its northern boundary (immediately south of the new brewery). So no building stood in this field in 1839.

The Tithe Apportionment described plot no. 131 as “Paddock and House” and said it was owned and occupied by **Nicholas Wood**. It is highly unlikely that this noted mining engineer really lived there himself. However it is entirely plausible that it would have been used to house some one engaged by him or the Hetton Coal Company, in which he was a partner, and which is believed to have been responsible for sinking or developing both Clarence Hetton and West Hetton collieries.



Extract from the 1839 Tithe Map

More will be said about Nicholas Wood's coal mining interests, in this area, in a separate account about local 19th century collieries elsewhere on this website. (See "Early coal mining in the area".) In short, he was one of the partners of the Hetton Coal Company which almost certainly gave the name "Hetton" to both West Hetton and Clarence Hetton collieries [but NOT to East Hetton colliery at Kelloe.]

More, too, is said about the residents of Park Hill – both the farmers who lived in the Park Hill farmstead and the coal mining officials and/or owners who may have lived in Nicholas Wood's house – in a separate account about the 19th century occupants of Quarrington's big houses. (See the "Some noteworthy people" section of this website.) In short, it is possible that it was the home of, first (in 1841), John George Quelch, coal owner and viewer of West Hetton and other collieries (and, later, Divisional Mineral Manager, Northern Division, for the North Eastern Railway Company); then, second (in 1851), Charles Andrew Baker, accountant and colliery agent (and, later, Local Secretary to the North-Eastern Railway Company), and – less likely but just possibly – third (in 1861), William Turnbull, Coal Inspector.

Quelch's home was listed in the 1841 census as "Park Hill House" and Baker's was listed in 1851 as "Park Hill". However the household of John Reed, farmer of Park Hill farm, was clearly living in the farmhouse. So, assuming these other local dignitaries also had substantial houses, it is suggested in that separate account that they may have lived at what was later called "Clarence Villa". It is less likely, though still possible, that Baker, who was listed in 1861 census as living at "Four Mile Bridge" also lived there.

In the 1851 census, one household was listed at Clarence Cottages – that of John Rutherford, Platelayer. Another was listed at Clarence Cottage [singular] – that of Thomas Biggs, Coal Mine Inspector. However it is not at all clear where these were. They were listed before and after the household of Richard Sheraton Johnson, Colliery Viewer, at West Hetton Lodge [then "House"]. But the households in this part of the census seem to have been listed in somewhat random order. So they may have been neither next door to each other nor even on the same side of the road as the later Clarence Villa Hotel. There was, however, a terrace of four [or, conceivably, five – if one was extremely small] cottages shown on the 1857 Ordnance Survey map, roughly on what is today the boundary between the Kicking Cuddy car park and the road down to Clarence Street.



Extract from 1st Ordnance Survey Map, 1857

Another household was listed in 1851 as at "Clarence Villa". This could possibly have been the later inn. Or it could be one of the row of cottages. (Or neither!) It was occupied by Susannah Corner, an unmarried dress maker, aged 36, and her 10-year-old niece. Her brothers and also her future husband were joiners. She was listed as head of household and it seems unlikely that she was the householder of the large Clarence Villa that was later a hotel. (It is just possible that the census enumerator, Thomas Ward, made a mistake, and that she was not truly the head of household but perhaps a servant or tenant of the main occupier of a large house, who was absent on census day.)

This entry was also on a separate page from those that listed the Rutherford and Biggs households, though again that may not tell us much about where they were. On that page, it was recorded that two properties were unoccupied... but they could have been anywhere!

So it may be that a large house, later Clarence Villa, was unoccupied in 1851. Or it may conceivably be that it was occupied by a dressmaker and her niece. Or perhaps what was later Clarence Villa Inn (subsequently the Kicking Cuddy) had not yet been built.

However another possibility is that, just as in 1841 John George Quelch, the viewer of West Hetton colliery, whose address then was given as "Park Hill House", MAY have been living at Clarence Villa, so also might another colliery agent, Charles A. Baker, in 1851. His address in that year's census was just given as "Park Hill". But he was in a quite different household to that of John Reed, who was still the farmer of Park Hill farm.

Despite the scale problems with the 1839 tithe map, mentioned above, it seems entirely possible that a new or enlarged house, called "Clarence Villa" was built between 1851 and 1857, on the site of the one presumably built by Nicholas Wood between 1835 and 1839.

For by 1857, when the 1st edition of Ordnance Survey map was surveyed, there was clearly a substantial dwelling called "Clarence Villa". This seems to have occupied essentially the same footprint as today's pub / restaurant. Today's main, thick walls are of stone and this is surely the building that stood here in the 1850s. (The flat roofed extensions on the north side, however, are post-1946.)

Fordyce published his "The History & Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham..." in 1859. In it, he described the road through Park Hill and Bowburn at that time: "At the north end of Coxhoe the Clarence Railway terminates; passing which, West Hetton pit village commences, the colliery being but a few yards distant. A little further on the road is the residence of Mr. Johnson [i.e. West Hetton Lodge]. At a short distance are Park Hill farm, and Crow Trees farm house and cottages. At Crow Trees toll-gate a road leads off to Sunderland by way of Rainton. Bow Burn consists of a few houses towards the Shincliffe station." He made no mention of Clarence Villa, nor any other large house, and it seems likely that he would have done so. So presumably the journey had been made before 1857, the year of the Ordnance Survey survey. But presumably, too, Fordyce's account was not so out of date as to have missed a significant house built before the 1851 census. This supports a conclusion that Clarence Villa is likely to have been built between 1851 and 1857.

It is nonetheless unclear whether anyone was living there at the time of the next census, in 1861. This looks unlikely. No dwellings are listed as uninhabited but that does not mean that none were. There were three households whose addresses were given as Clarence Cottage: those of Richard Wilkinson, coachman; David Forest, gardner, and Robert Heron, blacksmith. It seems likely that these lived in the short terrace mentioned above. There

were seven households recorded at Four Mile Bridge, and four at West Hetton¹. Although it seems unlikely that either of these would have been given as the address for Clarence Villa, it may be worth noting that the “West Hetton” households included a Colliery Engineer, Benjamin Dawson, and his family. His son Thomas Joseph (19) was described as Apprentice to Coal Viewer. It is improbable but not impossible that this family were living at Clarence Villa. (If it was, why was that not given as their address in the census, as it had been on the 1857 Ordnance Survey map?) Also, as mentioned above, one of the households at Four Mile Bridge was Charles A. Baker, Coal Inspector, who might also have been the occupant of the [un-named] Clarence Villa. I think on balance, however, that it is more likely that the future inn was unoccupied.

In passing, it is worth noting that there were three brickmakers living at Four Mile Bridge, which supports the notion that Bowburn Colliery had closed and that a brickworks had already opened – see below. One household, that of Francis Elliott, labourer, had the address of Bowburn Pit – presumably living at what was later called Bowburn Cottage.

Who owned (and built) Clarence Villa?

Summary: Clarence Villa was probably built by a colliery company.

By the time of the 1871 census, Clarence Villa was the home of Ralph Carnaby (about 1818-1865) and his wife and children. They had in 1851 been living at Blackgate, Coxhoe, and in 1861 at Cornforth Villa (later called Belgravia House, off Station Road), in Coxhoe. (These are likely to have been in the same house. The Blackgate address was very probably Clarence Villa, though I have not yet been able to confirm the likely date of that house’s construction.) He was described as a [Fire] Brick Manufacturer in 1861, 1871 and 1881, and Retired Brick Manufacturer in 1891, and his known brickworks at Coxhoe were at Coxhoe Pottery – south of Belgravia House / Cornforth Villa. However it seems possible that, when he lived at Clarence Villa, he may have at least had something to do with the

¹ The household mentioned here are those north of Coxhoe Beck, in Quarrington township. There were many more households in West Hetton Houses, which were south of the beck, in Coxhoe township.

Bowburn Brickworks, which then or later were across the road from there, on the site of Bowburn colliery. This colliery probably closed in the late 1860s.²

In the 1858 Kelly's Directory, Ralph Carnaby was listed, with the address of Carnforth [sic] villa, Coxhoe, as Agent to the West Hetton Colliery Co.. In July that year, he was declared bankrupt. When he was ordered to be brought up before the Judge of the County Court of Durham, he was described as "Shipowner, Manufacturer of Fire Clay Goods and Bricks, Common Brick and Tile Manufacturer, and General Merchant, and late of the same place Bookkeeper, in the employment of the West Hetton Coal Company".³ It seems that he would have had to recover very quickly from bankruptcy to have owned such splendid houses as Belgravia House / Cornforth Villa in 1861 and Clarence Villa 1871. It is much more likely that he was a tenant – perhaps of his employers.

This further suggests that the owners of West Hetton colliery may have owned, and perhaps even built, Clarence Villa. Coal companies often provided quite magnificent houses for their viewers (managers) and agents. West Hetton colliery changed ownership more than once during its short life time. It is likely that ownership of the buildings that housed its employees, both workmen and managers, transferred at the same time.

As mentioned above, Nicholas Wood, the first President of the North of England Institute of Mining Engineers (in 1852) and no relation of W. O. Wood and W. H. Wood, was in 1839 the leaseholder of the plot of land that contained Clarence Villa. One of the most eminent mining engineers of his time, Nicholas Wood was employed as agent at Killingworth (for Lord Ravensworth & Co.) and then at Hetton (for the Hetton Coal Co., in which he was a partner). But he had interests in many collieries and was a partner in several coal companies or partnerships. One of these, in 1842, owned Clarence Hetton colliery (which was where Coxhoe Football Club's ground is today) and in all probability was responsible for the naming of West Hetton colliery, too.

In 1855, Slater's Directory (p.15) listed Richard Sheraton Johnson as the Resident Agent of the "Crow Trees Colliery Company – [owners of] Heugh Hall, Bowburn, and West Hetton [collieries]". By that date, all these collieries were part of the Ralph Ward Jackson empire –

² Bowburn Colliery's closure date is not known for certain. Only the Main Coal seam (the Yard, or G seam, in the NCB's classification) was worked there, according to the Coal Authority's abandonment maps, and Fordyce (1859) only mentions this seam. A map dated 1857 shows only parts of this seam having been worked from here, which suggests it is not an abandonment map.

The Durham Mining Museum records that Henry Orton, smith, was killed at Bowburn (West Hetton) Colliery, aged 31, on 27 March 1861; John Hand, Hewer, aged 31, was killed at Bowburn (Engine Pit), Coxhoe, on 16 August 1865, and William Waggot, onsetter, was killed at Bowburn on 12 August 1868. If these accidents indeed refer to this original Bowburn Colliery, which is not certain, then mining the Main Coal seam must have continued till at least the late 1860s.

Mountford & Holroyde (2004) report that James Morrison & Co. bought Bowburn colliery from the West Hartlepool Harbour & Railway Co. in March 1866, when it also bought Coxhoe, West Hetton, Crow Trees, Heugh Hall and South Kelloe collieries. [C.E. Mountford & D.E. Holroyde (2004), "The Industrial Railways and Locomotives of County Durham", p. 422.]

So it appears that the colliery was still open in 1866. However it had almost certainly closed, at the latest, by 1871. By the time of the 1881 census, there was a family living at "Bowburn Pit & Brick Works" – that of Robert Miller, Railway Wagon Wright.

For more about nearby coal mines in the 19th century, see "Early coal mining in the area", elsewhere on the Bowburn LHS website.

³ London Gazette, 25 June 1858.

the West Hartlepool Harbour and Railway Company, which was formed in 1853. This company owned West Hetton Lodge, where Richard Sheraton Johnson was living in 1851 and 1861.

At the time of the 1881 census, William Henry Wood, a mining engineer, was living in West Hetton Lodge. By then it was presumably owned by James Morrison and Co., who had acquired all the Coxhoe, Quarrington and Thrislington collieries after Ralph Ward Jackson's downfall. W. H. Wood had been listed in the 1873 Kelly's Directory as resident viewer of Coxhoe Colliery and manager of Heugh Hall Colliery, and in 1882 he was the agent of Thrislington Colliery.

W. H. Wood's father, William Outterson Wood, was the manager of East Hetton colliery in the 1870s and later chief agent to the South Hetton Coal Company. In 1876, he was living at Belgravia House. (By 1881, he was living at Coxhoe Hall.) This does present a bit of a puzzle, as this company was NOT the same as the Hetton Coal Co. of Nicholas Wood and partners. East Hetton and West Hetton collieries do NOT appear ever to have had the same owners. So it would seem likely that both Belgravia House / Cornforth Villa and Clarence Villa were owned by different coal companies.

Nonetheless, in the absence of firmer evidence about the ownership of either of them, it seems very likely that both belonged to a succession of coal mining companies (as the collieries themselves changed hands). Either Nicholas Wood, or one of his coal owning companies/partnerships, or one of those that subsequently acquired their colliery interests, was probably responsible for building Clarence Villa, and then either rented it to Ralph Carnaby or, more probably, used it to house him as one of their employees.

Breweries

It is not yet clear who owned Clarence Villa when it became an inn (see below). As the first known landlord (in 1881) was also a coal miner, it seems likely that he was not its owner. Nor, indeed, is it yet known if it was ever owned by its licensee.

For much of the 20th century, at least, it was tied to Vaux Breweries. A photograph taken in 1946 shows a "Vaux's Ales" sign over what was then the front door – in the middle of the main building frontage – and it remained tied to Vaux till the brewery closed. However the pub did not at first belong to the brewery itself. Frank Douglas ["Douglas"] Nicholson (1905-1984), great grandson of the brewery's founder, Cuthbert Vaux, owned the pub personally. (He also owned the Pot and Glass, at Crossgate Moor.) He became the company's chairman in 1952 and, when he died, its ownership passed to the company. When that closed, in 1999, its hotels were acquired by Whitbread but I do not yet know who first acquired its chain of pubs. The Kicking Cuddy was subsequently bought by Punch Taverns and then, in 2012, by Trumark Properties Ltd., of Sunderland.

Under Mark Hird, managing director of Tavistock Leisure Ltd, a company associated with both Trumark and Durham Estates Ltd (which bought the former Assembly Rooms – see

below), the Sonnet 43 Brewery began production in September 2012. It is named after one of the most famous sonnets of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, who was born at Coxhoe Hall.⁴

The inn itself closed temporarily at the end of that year and, after the building of an extension and a complete refurbishment, was re-open in November 2013. In doing so, it became the third pub and restaurant to belong to the same group of companies and be supplied by the new brewery.⁵

Clarence Villa Hotel and its early landlords

David Simpson (2006)⁶ reports that Clarence Villa became an inn – the Clarence Villa Hotel – in 1870. However it is most unlikely that Ralph Carnaby was an innkeeper, when he was living there in 1871. (Nor was he a hotel guest, as the census listed him as head of household. It described him as Brick Manufacturer.)

The 1879 listed Robert Rutter at the Clarence Village [sic] hotel, Coxhoe. Aged 36, born at Lythe, Yorkshire, he was at the Hotel, with his first wife, Martha, at the time of the 1881 census. That described him as Coal Miner & Publican. By 1891, he had moved to the Royal Oak, Wolsingham. By then he had a different wife (though records of neither the death of Martha nor his marriage to Elizabeth have yet been found), where he was again described as Innkeeper and Coal Miner.

Mr. Rutter was succeeded at Clarence Villa, in 1882⁷, by John Ira Inman Edwards (1850-1921), who came from an unnamed pub (in the 1881 census) in Durham Road, Tudhoe, Durham, where he had been described as Publican.

Mr. Edwards was listed at the Clarence Villa Hotel in the 1890 Kelly's Directory and the 1891 census, which confusingly gave his address as Clarence Hotel. (The Clarence Hotel in Coxhoe had been re-named the Railway Inn before the 1881 census.) This was clearly Clarence Villa, however, as it was among the entries for Quarrington parish. By 1901, Mr. Edwards had moved to Coxhoe, when he was an innkeeper in Front Street. His son, John William Edwards, became the landlord (and one-time owner) of the Pit Laddie Inn. (See the history of Lamb's Close farm and the Pit Laddie inn, linked to the section on Farms.)

⁴ Elizabeth Barrett Browning was born at Coxhoe Hall on 6th March 1806. She was the eldest of the twelve children of Edward Barrett Moulton-Barrett (né Moulton), an heir to a wealthy Jamaican slave-owning family. She was the first in her family to be born in England for over two hundred years and was probably of mixed race origin. (See Jeannette Marks [1938], "The Family Barrett", New York.) EBB has been said to be the greatest Black British poet.

The family left Coxhoe in either 1809 or 1811 and she spent her youth at Hope End near Great Malvern, Worcestershire.

Her Sonnet 43, which begins with the line "How do I love thee? Let me count the ways...", was first published in 1850. It was not, of course, the lines that appear on the brewery doors, ending "I love it when beer is the right brew"!

⁵ The other two are The Lambton Worm, Chester-le-Street, and The White Lead, Hebburn, which were both launched earlier in the year.

⁶ David Simpson (2006), "The Durham Villages", p. 51/53

⁷ According to J. I. I. Edwards' obituary in 1921

John William Edwards' nickname was "Darkie". His father may also have been known by that name, as customers of John & Angela Richardson⁸ (see below) talked of Darkie Edwards as an early landlord of the Clarence Villa Hotel. He used to trade in horses and organized a horse fair every year. The horses used the triangular field to the south, near Four Mile Bridge, and the stables at the back of the pub. Two large stables were still there in the Richardsons' time. They used them in the 1980s, and another was used by the gardening club. There may have been other stables at one time but, if so, these had already been demolished when they moved in. It has been said that this was once a coaching inn and that the stables were used for this, too, at one time. This is unlikely to be so, however. As we have seen, Clarence Villa was not built until after the start of the railway age.

The presence of horses during this period was presumably the origin of the pub's nickname, "The Cuddy". It was still known as that locally, even after the pub was officially re-named "The Kicking Cuddy" and it is likely that the word "kicking" was added because its then owner thought it sounded like a pub name, rather than because it always been known as that.

Darkie Edwards [snr] brewed his own beer and had a bottling plant. The 1915 Ordnance Survey map shows two structures behind hotel, in the corner with the Assembly Hall. The three buildings were not there in the 1896 edition. However there was a smaller one across where the Assembly Hall later stood. Perhaps this was Mr. Edwards' brewery – a fitting predecessor to today's Sonnet 43 version. When the Richardsons had some alterations done to the main building, they found an old passageway that led towards the Assembly Hall. This may have connected the pub to the old brewery. When they put in a patio at the back, they found a lot of buried bottles. It is not known whether the new brewery owners found more, when refurbishing in 2013.



Clarence Villa on the 2nd and 3rd Ordnance Survey Maps (1896 and 1915), showing the Assembly Hall in 1915

The Assembly Hall

The Assembly Hall (or Room or Rooms) was the building immediately south of the Kicking Cuddy. It is now the Sonnet 43 Brewery.

⁸ I am grateful to John and Angela Richardson for much of the contents of this history, as well as for their photographs.

According to Robin Walton⁹, it was built by Captain Topp who, he says, became the third licensee at Clarence Villa Hotel, in 1898. This is, however, unlikely to be the case.

“Captain Topp” was almost certainly Company Sergeant (not Captain) John Topp, who was born at Gateshead in about August 1860 and served in the Army from 1878 (when he was not yet 18, but gave his age as 20) till 1907. He was posted for four years in India (1880-1884) and then briefly in South Africa (at the very end of the 2nd Boer War, in 1902) but was otherwise stationed in this country. He married Mary Davison, also of Gateshead, on 21 April 1884, and had five children, all born in Durham or Northumberland. The youngest of these were both born in Berwick on Tweed, in 1897 and 1907, and he was living there at the time of the 1901 census. So it seems most unlikely that he was the licensee of the Clarence Villa Hotel in 1898.

In the 1901 census, John Topp was described as Sergeant instructor of Volunteers - Infantry. It seems quite possible, therefore, that his involvement in this area was in setting up the Coxhoe Rifle Club, in the Assembly Hall, rather than as licensee. The rifle club was formed in 1905 in the Assembly Hall, next to Clarence Villa, by John Ramsay, manager of Tursdale Colliery, who lived at West Hetton Lodge, and James Gornall, of Commercial Road, Coxhoe, a draper. “Paraffin lamps were used to light the targets and the rifles used were Martini. At this time rifle clubs sprang up all over the country”, presumably because of failings in the Boer War, according to Walton¹⁰. The Rifle Club closed in 1932.¹¹

According to John & Angela Richardson, who were licensees at the Kicking Cuddy (formerly the Clarence Villa Hotel) in the 1970s and '80s (see below), customers told them that Captain Topp was a relative of Winifred Oxley (1926-1991), the wife of Bob Oxley, of Park Hill farm. However no such family connection has been found. Mrs. Oxley's mother, Louisa Wilkinson (née Dodds), inherited The Willows farm from her brother, Walter James Dodds (1886-1934). He was referred to by Mr. Oxley as “Major” Walter Dodds. However his military service record has not been found. He was described as Civil Engineer, Dock Construction & Maintenance Tyne Improvement Commission, in the 1911 census. When he acquired Paradise Farm (once notorious for being the origin of the 1906 Coxhoe cholera epidemic), which he re-named “The Willows”, he was following his parents' trade of farming. He was the first to use deep litter farming, with huge sheds, according to Mr. Oxley, and had 20 to 30,000 hens.

The Assembly Hall was originally used for dances and plays. Also, “before cinemas, magic lantern shows were held in the Assembly Hall and in the Chapels and Church rooms [in Coxhoe]”, according to Walton¹².

It was used as a Fire Station during World War II. (Source: J&A Richardson). The remains of foundations next to them in the 1980s may have been connected with this, although the structures were already there in 1915. (See above.)

Peter Wendle, of Spennymoor, had the use of the Assembly Hall in 1971, when the Richardsons arrived. He had a waste paper and dolomite etc. business, and used it as a garage. Norman Fitt then rented it, but let it to Ray Booth, who used it as a spray shop.

⁹ Robin Walton (1986), *History of Coxhoe*, p.21

¹⁰ *ibid*, p.78

¹¹ *Durham County Advertiser*, 24 June 1932.

¹² *Op. cit.*, p.86

It was converted into a brewery, Sonnet 43, in 2012.

The ownership of The Assembly Hall, over time, is uncertain. J&A Richardson believe it may have belonged to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners when they were at the Kicking Cuddy. As we have seen, it was either leased from them or owned outright by Nicholas Wood, the mining engineer, in 1839, along with the whole plot that included the later Clarence Villa.

It is not thought, however, that it belonged to Vaux Brewery, when they owned the pub. The Sonnet 43 brewery is owned today by Durham Estates Ltd., of Sunderland.

Garage

For some years during the first half of the 20th century, the owners of Clarence Villa – or perhaps the landlord of the time – owned petrol pumps at the front of, which were operated by the landlord. It is not known when these first appeared but it was probably during the 1920s or '30s.

The pumps were subsequently operated by Laurie Embleton, who lived at 1, Clarence Street, next to the pub, until he built a garage next door, in about 1960, and erected new ones in its forecourt. He had bought the property from Sidney Joseph Slade in 1959.¹³ Mr. Embleton also owned some or all of the houses in Clarence Street, but sold them off – most of them, probably, to their occupants.¹⁴

Mr. Embleton moved his business to Durham City in the 1970s and the Clarence Villa Service Station was taken over by George Delap, and later by John Lovett.

Despite its name, the garage was never part of the pub property.

¹³ Source: Land Registry.

¹⁴ Lawrence Embleton sold 8, Clarence Street, for instance, to Frederick Denney and Elsie Denney on 27 February 1960. (Source: Land Registry.)



*The Clarence Villa Hotel in 1946
(photograph thanks to Coxhoe Local History Society)*

Early 20th Century Landlords

The 1901 census shows Robert Weightman (1852-1923) as the new landlord of Clarence Villa. He had only recently arrived, having previously been a joiner on Lord Durham's estate at Bowes House for 24 years.¹⁵ By 1911, he was the licensee at 63, Claypath [the General Gordon Inn], Durham. (His obituary in the Durham County Advertiser¹⁶ is therefore incorrect in saying that he moved there in 1913.)

Robert Weightman's son, Thomas Lancelot (about November 1882-September 1961) became Steward of Crowtrees WM Club, Bowburn, in 1920. His wife was the daughter of Thomas Ralph Burns & Barbara (née Newton), who owned the Hare & Hounds (later the Hare & Greyhound), Bowburn, before it was bought by Nimmos.

Kelly's 1910 Directory listed Augustine Mann (about 1869-1935) at the Clarence Villa Hotel. However by the time of the 1911 census he was the publican at the Market Hotel, Willington. He was born at Cambois, Northumberland, and had come to Durham from Cowpen, near Morpeth. He later moved to South Shields, where he died in 1935.

The next licensee at Clarence Villa was Charles Reading (1855-1926). Born in Somerset, he had presumably come to the North East with the railways, as he was described as Railway Signaller in the censuses of 1881, 1891 and 1901. He too did not last long here. For, whilst he was at Clarence Villa for the 1911 census, by 1914 Kelly's was listing Thomas Alderson as the licensee.

¹⁵ Durham County Advertiser 28 September 1923, p4

¹⁶ *ibid*

Mr. Alderson was presumably the Thomas Alderson who had been a neighbour of John Ira Inman Edwards in 1881, when they were both publicans (at pubs unnamed in the census) at Durham Road, Tudhoe. He too did not stay long at Clarence Villa. He may be the T. A. who died at Western Hill, Durham, in 1918, leaving effects to value of £135 15s. 5d. to his widow, Annie.

It is possible that Thomas Alderson had already left, even by 1914. For in that year George Stephenson was registered to vote at Clarence Villa. So also were 23 other people (all men, of course), whereas only Thomas Alderson was registered at Clarence Villa Hotel. Most or all of them presumably lived in the Clarence Villas cottages. (These were not the cottages referred to above, but what is now called Clarence Street.) George Stephenson is mentioned here because he was a publican. In 1911, he had been living at the West Hetton Inn, described in the census as Inn Keeper. He may still have been that in 1914, for that inn was not named on the electoral register, and it is conceivable that it was included as being at Clarence Villa. However it is more likely that George Stephenson had indeed taken over from Thomas Alderson. After Private Frederick ("Kidder") Stephenson 2320, 1st/5th Bn., Durham Light Infantry, died of wounds in France, on 29 September 1915, aged 20, his parents were given as George and Frances Stephenson, Clarence Villa, Durham Road, Coxhoe.



A photograph from outside the pub in about 1920, looking South East, shows West Hetton Houses at the in the middle distance, at the bottom of Coxhoe.

In the very centre of the photograph is an insin reading "Clarence Villa Hotel".

By 1918, the new landlord at Clarence Villa was William Tweddle and he was still there in 1921 (Kelly's Directory). He is presumed to be the William Tweddle (about 1868-1931) who had previously been a colliery winding engineman at Ryhope. As well as his wife, Mary, their son Ralph was registered to vote at the Clarence Villa Hotel in 1918, as an

absent voter.¹⁷ William Tweddle was later the licensee at the Wellington Hotel, Ryhope. He died on 25 April 1931. He had been born at Kelloe but spent most of his married life at Ryhope.

In the Kelly's Directory of 1925, Mr. George Daghish was listed at the Clarence Villa Hotel.

In the Kelly's Directory of 1929, Mr. William Longstaff was listed at the Clarence Villa Hotel. William & Edith Longstaff were registered to vote there in 1930.

Park Hill local

Although Clarence Villa was always in Quarrington township, then Quarrington parish and then Cassop-cum-Quarrington parish, its proximity to Coxhoe has always led to it being considered to be part of that village. Its postal address is Coxhoe and until relatively recently it had "The Clarence Villa, Coxhoe" or "Clarence Villa Hotel, Coxhoe", in large letters on the front of the building. (See photographs above and below.) Moreover, till the 1930s the majority of its customers doubtless lived south of Coxhoe Beck, in Coxhoe itself. Its nearest settlement before that had been the West Hetton Houses, between Coxhoe Beck, the Durham-Stockton road and the Clarence Railway. These were demolished after World War II and the area was waste land for many years. (It has since been re-developed as Bower Court.)

Even before this, in 1931, however, Durham Rural District Council began building the first council houses for Bowburn miners. They were built south of the village, on the southern part of Park Hill farm¹⁸, which the Council had purchased from Robert Oxley [snr]. The first fourteen houses in the street now known as Park Hill Estate¹⁹ were ready for occupation "and all, with the exception of the last block, were roofed in", according to a report to Durham RDC on 5 May 1931.²⁰

After the War, this estate grew to over 200 houses, while another council house estate was built north of the village – much of it in what was originally part of Shincliffe Parish, before the parish boundary was changed to include it in Cassop-cum-Quarrington.

Inevitably, the Clarence Villa became the local for many residents of the new estate – though their custom will have been split between here and the Pit Laddie (the site of which is now under the motorway junction) and, of course, Crowtrees Working Men's Club.

¹⁷ This was not the Pte Ralph Tweddle 44864, 5th Bn., Alexandra, Princess of Wales's Own (Yorkshire Regiment), who was killed in action, on 19 July 1918, and buried at St. Erme Comunal Cemetery Extension, Aisne, France. He was born about 1884 at Page Bank, the son of John & Isabella Tweddle.

¹⁸ Some of the northern part of Park Hill farm had already been developed as Durham Road West, in Bowburn. Much has since disappeared under the motorway and then the motorway service station. See the section of this website about Farms.

¹⁹ At the time, they were simply called the "Council Houses". So what is now 13, Park Hill Estate, for instance, was originally "13, Council Houses".

²⁰ Durham County Advertiser 8 May 1931 p.16



*On the left, an extract from the 3rd Ordnance Survey map (1915).
On the right, thanks to maps.google.co.uk, shows Park Hill today.*

The first new landlord to entertain this new Park Hill clientele was Benjamin Harrison, who was listed at the Clarence Villa Hotel in the Kelly's Directory of 1934.

William Hartley was the licensee during the War. He was listed at the Clarence Villa Hotel in the 1938 Kelly's Directory. William & Martha Hartley were registered to vote there in 1939 & 1945.

Albert & Isobel Jones were presumably the licensees at the Clarence Villa Hotel in 1951, when they were registered to vote there with their daughter, Josephine M., and Joseph Speed (believed to be Isobel Jones' father).



*The Clarence Villa after petrol pumps had gone
and new bar entrance had been built, c.1960*

George A. & Mary Thornton, and Ann Matheson, were there in 1961.

Gordon & Patricia Snowdon were landlords in the 1960s and '70s, probably leaving in late 1970. GS had grown up in Bowburn; his parents lived in Norton Avenue before moving to Park Avenue in the 1940s. It was presumably during the Snowdons' years here that the pub was re-named as "The Kicking Cuddy". It had been known familiarly as "The Cuddy" for many years before that – probably since Darkie Edwards (snr) was there – see above. An inn sign in front of the building showed pictures on each side of a cuddy (or donkey) kicking a hapless victim outside the pub entrance.



Angela Richardson playing shove-halfpenny in front of the new innsign

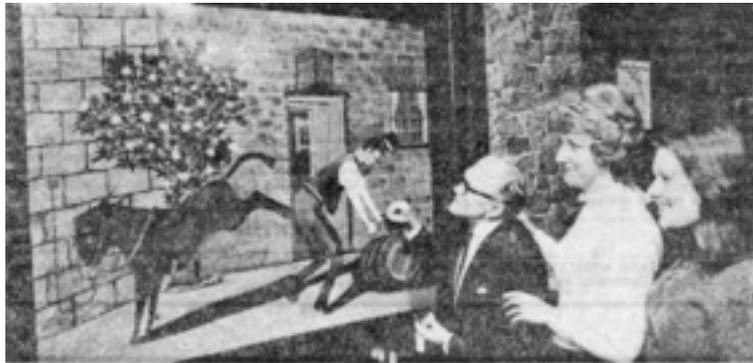
Norah Redpath, from Embleton, Northumberland, was landlady for the first 9 months or so of 1971. It is understood that she and her son then returned to Northumberland.

John & Angela Richardson took over the licence in 6 October 1971. They had for the previous nine months been trainee managers, for Vaux Breweries, at the Salutation, Framwellgate Moor, spending some of that time at the Pot & Glass, Crossgate Moor, and at the County, in Darlington. They were to stay at the Cuddy for twenty years, reversing an increasing trend for licensees to stay only a few years in one place. They made several changes, including building a patio and opening a beer garden, increasing the size of the bar area and serving meals in the lounge at the back.

In 1984, the Kicking Cuddy was included in the first Durham Beer Guide, produced by the Campaign for Real Ale. It was described as a "popular roadside pub with pleasant lounge and restaurant [which] attracts couples, young and old, for the quiet relaxed atmosphere". The guide listed the pub because of its Lorimer's Scotch Ale. (This was brewed at the Caledonian Brewery, in Edinburgh, which Vaux Breweries had acquired in 1971. In 1986, Vaux decided to cease brewing there and transfer the Lorimer's operation to Sunderland.) The Kicking Cuddy was one of two pubs listed in the CAMRA guide under Coxhoe, the other being The Cricketers, in Cornforth Lane, which sold Vaux and Samson ales. The only pub listed under Bowburn was The Wheatsheaf Hotel, which was listed because of its Youngers No. 3.

In 1986, the Richardsons celebrated the pub's centenary – this being the year given to them by the brewery. (Could 1886 have been the year when Vaux first had an interest in the Clarence Villa Hotel?) They held a party for older people which was very well attended, mostly by the retired miners and their wives who then lived at Park Hill. They charged 1 penny a pint... provided customers could pay in old pennies!

A new Kicking Cuddy innsign was erected and the original was placed in a hole created in the wall between two parts of the bar, so both sides could be seen.



*Both sides of the old innsign were displayed inside, thanks to a hole in the wall.
This press photograph shows the artist, Ted Cullen,
with Angela Richardson and barmaid Sandra Featherstone*

John & Angela Richardson left the Kicking Cuddy in April 1991 and were replaced by John & Lynn Guarnaccio. They were later licensees at the Hare & Greyhound (2006-2008) and then The Cooperage (2008-2010). Mr. Guarnaccio, who has lived in Bowburn since he moved here from Canada at the age of six, also owns a hairdressing salon in Newton Hall.

During the late 1990s, the licensees were Edwards [“Mick”] & Patricia Moore. He was another local lad, having been brought up in Coxhoe. They later moved to Spain.

Nigel & Karen J. Applegarth were landlords of the The Kicking Cuddy in 2000.

Trudy Crawley was there between 2009 and 2011.

The pub closed at the end of 2012, to be re-furbished and re-opened in November 2013.



The Clarence Villa – during refurbishment, November 2013