

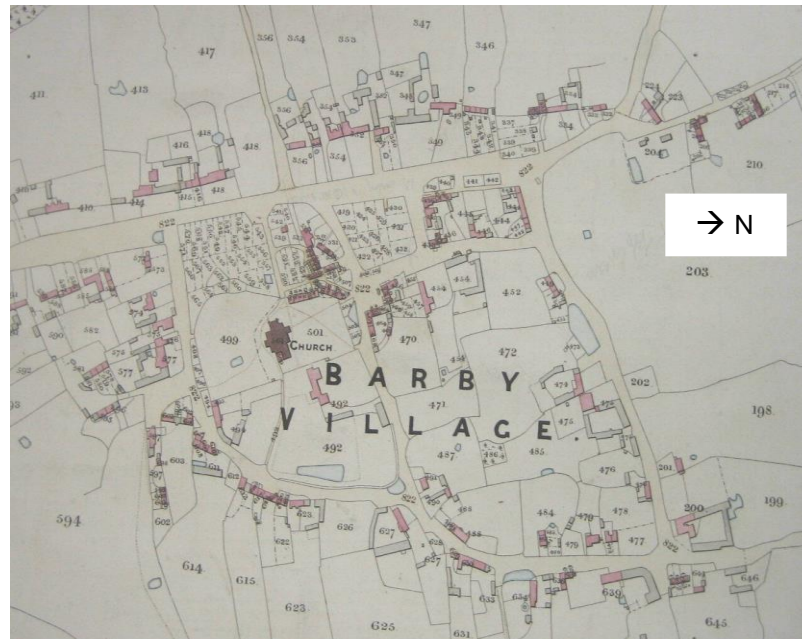
GENESIS OF 6 AND 6a THE GREEN



**BARBY LOCAL
HISTORY GROUP
FEBRUARY
2025**



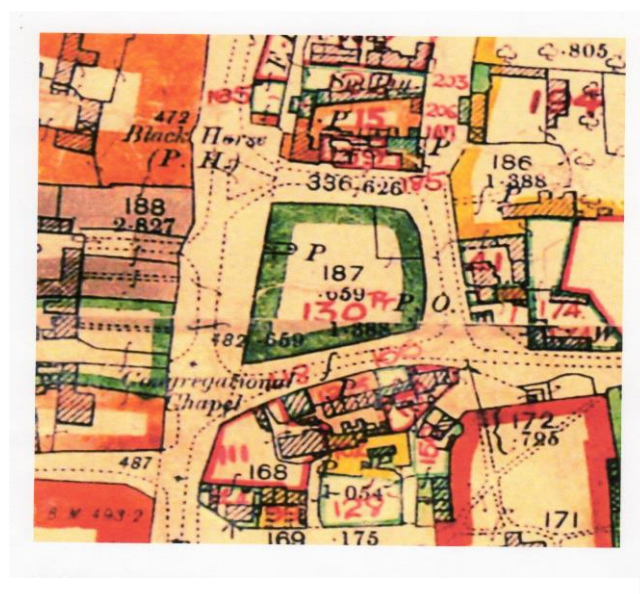
The site on which the two detached houses numbered **6 & 6a The Green** reside, has had a convoluted history which appears to have started in the mid 19th century. The Oakley Survey map of 1840 does show some structures on plots covering the site but towards the east of the site and positioned further back from the roadway. They are presumed to be cottages but at present nothing is known about them or who might have lived there.



The Oakley Survey of 1840

Northamptonshire Record Office, ZA 431 & Map 4418

At the western end of the site on *The Green*, an Independent or *Congregational Chapel* was built in the late 1840s. About this time there was constructed a terrace of five cottages immediately adjacent to, but not abutted to, the chapel. The map accompanying the Valuation survey of 1910 below clearly shows both the terrace and the chapel.



The National Archives, IR126/5/125 & IR126/5/191

The terrace can be seen in this earliest undated photograph, below, believed to date from about 1920. The *Chapel* is on the extreme right with the terrace beside it; the view is from *Rugby Road* looking towards *Rectory Lane*.



Barby Local History Group (BLHG) P02/092 Village Centre

The cottages were originally known as *Cleaver's Cottages* after their first owner John Cleaver. It is probable that Cleaver built the cottages since he was described in national censuses as a bricklayer. John (born in Mount Pleasant, presumed Northampton) and his wife Martha (born in Kilsby) were recorded in Barby in every census from 1841 to 1881, together with their son Richard in 1851 and 1861, and with a granddaughter in 1871. John died just before the 1891 census but Martha was there and survived till 1893.

The cottages retained their name in the 1901 census, but two of them were unoccupied. The residents of the other three were:

John Watts, a bricklayer's labourer, his wife Emily and two children;

John Elkington, a postman, his wife Lettie and four children; and

Susannah Warren, a widow, and John Smith, a boarder and wood sawyer.

At the 1911 census, Susannah Fisher, a widow, and her five children occupied one cottage; John Smith was still resident; as were the Elkington family, now having seven children. The Elkingtons were still resident in 1921.¹

Meanwhile, the cottages were now known as *Chapel Row*. On 4 March 1905, they were sold by the Rugby solicitor William Ferdinand Wratishaw, mortgaged for £200. The purchaser was Walter George Hopkins, a well-known Barby builder. The cottages were fully occupied at the time, the tenants being Watts, Wicherley, Elkington, Fisher and Smith.²

¹For more information about members of the Elkington family, see [www.barbylhg.org.uk/Local Topics/ The Elkington Family of Barby](http://www.barbylhg.org.uk/Local%20Topics/The%20Elkington%20Family%20of%20Barby).

² Barby Local History Group (BLHG), Deeds of 6a The Green

Walter shortly afterwards married Emily Mary Blunt and, in anticipation of the marriage, a trust deed had been drawn up giving Emily the right to live there as a tenant for life, with the properties being conveyed to Steven John Blunt and Frank Hopkins. Walter paid off the mortgage on 30 December 1938.

When the 1939 Register was compiled, the residents of *Chapel Row* were: the Elkington family, John now being a farm labourer; Herbert Leslie Rowe, a plumber, and his wife Mary; Arthur Ashwell, a council road worker, his wife Minnie and four children; Ernie J Foster and four other Fosters; and Jim Eagleston, a widower and engineering labourer, and two unmarried children.

In 1946, the Ashwells, Mary Rowe and three Elkingtons were still in residence.

Emily Hopkins had inherited the five cottages after Walter died in 1940. By 1951, she was living in Byfield and the cottages, occupying 554 square yards, were stated to be derelict. She sold her property on 9 June to *Albico (Precision Engineering) Ltd* for £50.³

Albico acquired adjacent properties in 1956 and 1957, and use of the piece of land between *Chapel Row* and the former chapel itself in 1954; but had outgrown the available space by 1970, when the factory building was taken over, and presumably rented, by the engineering firm *Andrews Maclaren*, who outgrew the site and moved to Long Buckby later in the 1970s.⁴

A few other businesses leased the Barby factory for short periods. A significant occupant was John Smith, possibly related to the man of the same name who was a tenant in *Chapel Row*. This John Smith ran a business in Rugby called *Rugby Woodturning*. In about 1984/85, Smith moved his business to Barby, where he rented the vacant factory site. It was a successful business, at its peak employing seven men, including two apprentices. He was unable to purchase the site, but entered into a legal contract which would allow him to purchase the property if and when the land purchased in 1954 was required to become reinstated as a part of the *Memorial Hall* property (the former chapel), which was destined to be restored as a private dwelling.

John Smith bought the factory site in about 1998, but the following year decided to move to Scotland. He retained ownership but passed the business to Nigel Priest, one of his former employees. Priest moved in on 1 January 2000 and changed the name of the business to *Barby Village Woodturning*.⁵

Products included display showcases and very specialised heavy timbers, many for old style timber framed buildings. Priest was also a sub-contractor for Neil Stevenson, the bespoke

³ Deeds of *6a The Green*; for a history of *Albico*, see *Albico (Precision Engineering) Ltd* at www.barbylhg.org.uk

⁴ Deeds of *6a the Green*; see also [www.barbylhg.org.uk/Local Topics/Andrews Maclaren](http://www.barbylhg.org.uk/Local%20Topics/Andrews%20Maclaren)

⁵ Information about John Smith's business has been given to BLHG via conversations between Nigel Priest and Robin Aird, the present occupant of *6a The Green*.

furniture makers in Church Lawford, who now have a Royal Warrant so that some of Priest's work is to be found in Buckingham Palace and at Windsor.



BLHG P12/50. 2006

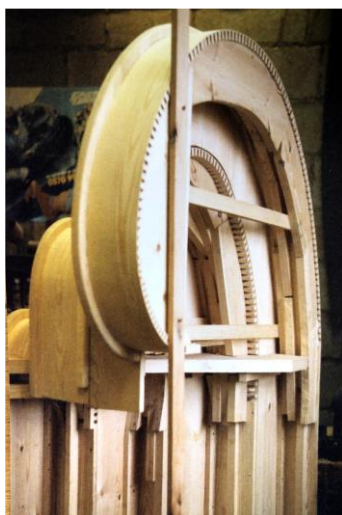


BLHG P13/119, 2007



BLHG P12/120, 2007

See above - timbers for a wood framed building showing markings to specify their positions.



Above: Timbers for a staircase, BLHG P1803 Village Centre, 2006



Right: Nigel Priest, BLHG P1802C Village Centre, 2006

In 1987, the land purchased by Bill Cockerill and John Griffin in 1954 had been sold by E E J Cockerill to John Macdonald Smith of Long Lawford, who sold it in 2002 to Gordon John Innes and Sabine Yannick Innes to become part of the converted *Memorial Hall* property. This led to the demolition of part of the factory; the rest remained occupied by *Barby Village Woodturning*.⁶



BLHG P18/04 Old Chapel, 2003

The photograph above shows the demolition of the end section of the factory and the one below shows the remaining part and new addition to the converted *Memorial Hall*.



BLHG PD01/003

There were no further changes to the site until June 2019 when it was sold by John Smith to *David Miller Homes Ltd* of Oakham, Rutland, who then purchased land to the south of where

⁶ Deeds of 6a *The Green*; for more information about the Chapel/Memorial Hall, see [www.barbylhq.org.uk/LocalTopics/From Chapel to Memorial Hall and Beyond](http://www.barbylhq.org.uk/LocalTopics/FromChapeltoMemorialHallandBeyond)

6 *The Green* now stands. Their planning application was approved for ‘Demolition of workshop and construction of two detached dwellings with accesses and off-road parking’. This ended the nearly 70 years of Barby’s manufacturing on *The Green* and the site reverted once more to being residential.⁷



The construction of 6 & 6a *The Green* underway in 2020
BLHG PD2020/028



6 & 6a *The Green* completed and occupied in 2021
BI HG PD2021/003

Significantly, both houses are equipped with air-source heat-pump systems supplying the dwellings with all their space heating and hot water requirements.

⁷ Deeds of 6a *The Green*