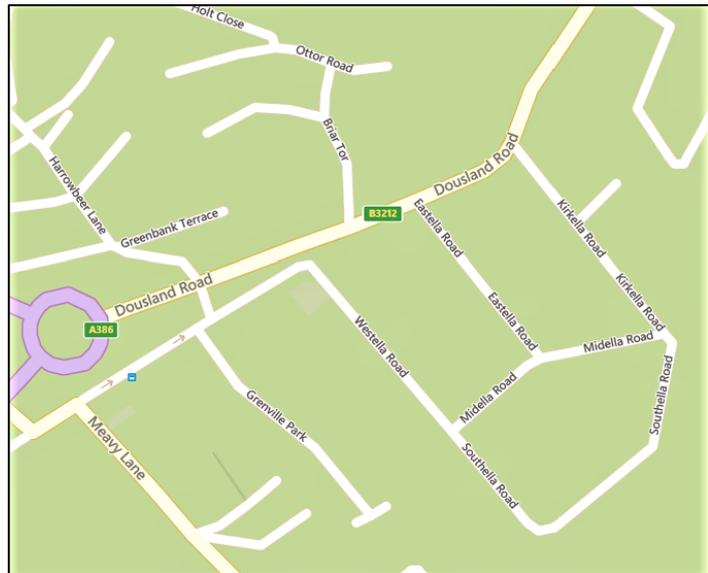


A Link between West Ella and Devon

Introduction

This story came about following a chance comment in a Hull-based Facebook group having local history as one of its themes. A member of the group noted that “there is a Kirk Ella Road in Plymouth”. Why should this be? What connection, if any, has Plymouth, Devon, with the village of Kirk Ella, near Hull, in East Yorkshire? These questions, stemming from the above chance comment, have given rise to the fascinating tale that you are about to read.

There is a housing estate in Yelverton, a village around 10 miles north of Plymouth, where street names read as follows: Westella Road, Eastella Road, Southella Road and Kirkella Road (there is even a Midella Road, but no Northella Road). This estate, officially named as Westella Park, is known to locals as “The Ellas”, and was first developed by a builder called William Ernest Hiscock Howard



“The Ellas” in Yelverton, Devon

early in the 20th century. He was born far from Devon (and East Yorkshire), in Kent, and it is William who is the main character in our story. However, along the way we shall also meet many other members of his wider family and their stories form a fascinating sub-plot. We shall also attempt to find a solution to the double mystery of why William took the additional surname, Howard (he was born Hiscock), and what his connection, if any, might have been with West Ella¹ in East Yorkshire.

In further intrigues, we learn of a family dispute over property, a rare Victorian divorce, a fatal voyage to New Zealand, a tragic suicide, two cases of bigamy and the formation of a bond between two families who met in Hull but whose origins were in widely separated parts of England.

¹ There has been much debate locally in East Yorkshire about the correct spelling for the name of the village. Is it Westella or West Ella? It is now more or less universally accepted that the West Ella is the correct version, although in the past it has been frequently written as Westella. Clearly, Westella has been adopted in Yelverton.

The Hiscocks

Our story begins in the seafaring community of Sheerness on the southern banks of the Thames estuary. William John Hiscock, the father of our main protagonist, was born in Sheerness, Kent, in 1838, the eldest son of Josiah and Caroline (née Kitt) Hiscock, who, in 1841 were living with Caroline's father, William, in Thompson's Row, Minster, Kent. William Kitt, a joiner at Royal Naval Dockyard, Sheerness, was a native of Antony, Cornwall. His daughter, Caroline, had been born at New Passage, Plymouth, Devon, and her father may have been employed, at the time, at the nearby, naval dockyard at Devonport. Many of those living in the neighbourhood of Thompson's Row, Minster, were employed in maritime occupations, a number of them also hailing from Plymouth and Devonport. They included shipwrights, caulkers, riggers and sailmakers, the latter being the occupation of Josiah Hiscock.

We move on now to the Spring of 1861 and to the village of Eastchurch, a few miles to the east of Sheerness. The bells of All Saint's parish church were ringing in celebration of the marriage of William John Hiscock and Barbara Peters and there was much merriment in the village. By this time, William John was beginning to make his way as a grocer's assistant and Barbara was the daughter of the local relieving officer.

Early the following year, their first son was born, whom they named William Ernest. There followed two daughters, Isabel (1863) and Caroline (1866), and then, two sons, Charles Henry Miles (1869) and Arthur Edward (1870). By 1871, the family had established themselves at 4 High Street, Minster, and William John Hiscock was described in the census of that year as a 'grocer and Italian warehouseman'.²

Sometime during the ensuing years, significant changes had taken place. By 1881, the Hiscock family had moved to Gasgoyne Street, Hackney, in east London, where William John Hiscock described himself as an insurance clerk and William Ernest, aged 19 by this time, as a book-keeper to a fur merchant. The following year, William John Hiscock was to be found resident at Ashley Villas, Linnaeus Street, Hull, and is listed in White's Directory of that year as a commercial traveller, although no line of business is indicated. Whether the whole family had moved to Hull, or whether William John was alone as a lodger

² An 'Italian warehouseman' was someone who stocked goods from Italy such as pasta, olive oil, pickles and fruits.

at this address is not known. If the latter, it was not long before the whole family followed him to Hull where they eventually established themselves on Beverley Road, then in the Parish of Cottingham, at a house named *Rose Cottage*. The area was known at the time as St. John's Wood, so named after the nearby Anglican church³. Very soon, William John Hiscock began to build up a successful grocery business in Hull and became deeply involved in the life of his local church, Queen's Road Wesleyan Chapel. However, little did he know of the various family tragedies that were later to befall him.

It is at this point that we must leave the Hiscock family for a time. We shall pick up their story later and now, for a time, we follow the life of another family from Devon who, like the Hiscocks, travelled north to Hull to pursue their fortune. They, too, would have a significant part to play in the establishment of the Westella Park estate in Yelverton.

The Pipers

The next part of our story begins at 3 Lambhay Hill in Plymouth, Devon, close to The Hoe (of Sir Francis Drake fame). This was the home of Richard and Mary Ann Piper. They had married around 1830 and their sixth child, Edwin, was born on at this house in September 1844. Although Richard and Mary Ann had ten children in total it is mainly the fortunes of Edwin and his younger brother, Frederick John, that we will follow here.

Richard seems to have been willing to travel to find work as a carpenter and joiner. His wife, Mary Ann Wood,⁴ was a native of Portsmouth and, although we cannot be sure, they probably met in the town. After their marriage, there were spells living in Exeter and Bristol before returning to Plymouth in the early 1840s. All the places where Richard found work were renowned for their maritime heritage and it is possible that Richard's occupation was in some way connected to shipping and the shipbuilding industry. In 1861, he declared his occupation as 'foreman of carpenters and joiners', which suggests that he was an employee rather than self-employed. Indeed, it is intriguing to speculate as to whether he ever crossed paths in Devonport with William Kitt (who we met earlier and was William John Hiscock's grandfather) whose trade was also carpentry. Certainly,

³ The church is now known as St. John's, Newland.

⁴ Family anecdote has it that Mary Ann Wood Piper (1811-1892) helped her father smuggle wine by hiding bottles in her skirts because the revenue laws were considered unjust.

this would have been a possibility before William moved to Kent. However, we shall probably never know if they ever met.

We now move forward to the 1870s, when Richard Piper's further peregrinations brought him to Hull, another major port. By 1881, he and his wife were living with their widowed daughter Edith Henrietta Drew⁵ and granddaughter, Edith Annie, in Bright Street in the Dansom Lane area. Whether his two sons, Edwin and Frederick John, had preceded him there, followed him or moved from Plymouth at the same time is not known, but they and their respective families were living next door to each other in nearby Wilde Street. In the 1881 census, both Edwin and Frederick John were described as builders.

Why they had all chosen Hull as their new home is not certain but, at that time, Hull was a thriving town with growing industries. In particular, the fishing industry was expanding rapidly and this had attracted many fishermen from other parts of the country, especially Devon and Kent. Many among the fishing community in Hull during this period hailed from one or other of these two counties. One of the most successful trawler owners was Robert Hellyer who moved to Hull from Brixham, Devon, in the 1850s. By the end of the 1870s he and his sons owned a small fleet of sailing smacks. The Hellyer's fishing company was originally called Devon Fishing Company Ltd and later became Hellyer Brothers Ltd.⁶ Possibly word had got to south-west Devon that there were fortunes to be made in Hull and, perhaps, this intelligence had inspired the Pipers to make the move north.

However, by 1883, the families of both Richard and his younger son, Frederick John, had returned to Plymouth. Richard would have been in his late sixties and, perhaps, he and his wife were thinking of retirement. Another factor might have been the remarriage of their daughter Edith to Alfred Tonkin, in Plymouth, in the spring of that year. It could have been that Richard and Mary Ann had taken on grand-parenting duties, as Edith and Alfred had three children in quick succession following their marriage. The three generations were living together as a family unit in Halwell Street, Plymouth, in 1891.

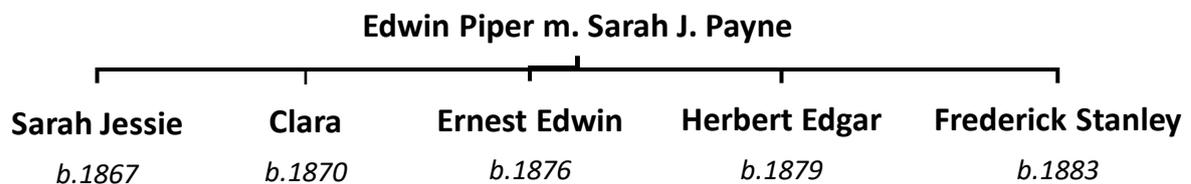
⁵ Edith Henrietta married a man named Drew during the early 1870s but her husband died soon after their first child was born. She married her second husband, Alfred Tonkin (a native of Helston, Cornwall), in Plymouth in the spring of 1883.

⁶ With the wealth derived from his business, Robert Hellyer was able to build a large house on Packman Lane, Kirk Ella, known as 'Western Villa'.

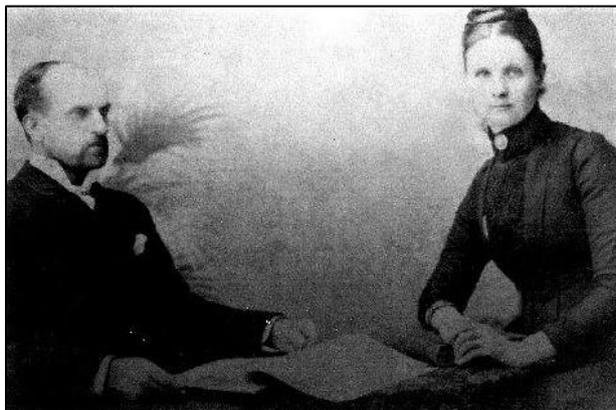
We shall briefly mention Richard’s younger son, Frederick John Piper, a little later but, for now, it is Edwin Piper and his family that is our focus.

When the rest of his family decided to return to Devon, Edwin Piper and his family remained in Hull, a decision crucial to our story. Had Edwin returned to Plymouth with his parents and younger brother, Yelverton would almost certainly not have had its Westella Park estate. This fact will become apparent as the story unfolds.

By this time, Edwin was earning his living as a builder in Hull and was probably doing well in the rapidly growing town. In 1882, he had moved to larger accommodation at *Fernleigh House* on Holderness Road and, by 1883, his family was complete as shown in the family tree below, although three children had died in childhood (not shown)⁷



There are some fascinating stories to tell about each of his five children,⁸ some longer than others, but the immediate story concerns the younger of his two daughters, Clara.



Edwin and Sarah Jayne Piper

During the 1880s, Edwin Piper moved house from Holderness Road and took up residence at *Torrington House* on Beverley Road. He may have built the house himself and perhaps named it after the eponymous town in his home county of Devon. For the purposes of our story, the main consequence

of this move was that he had become a near neighbour of William John Hiscock and his family.

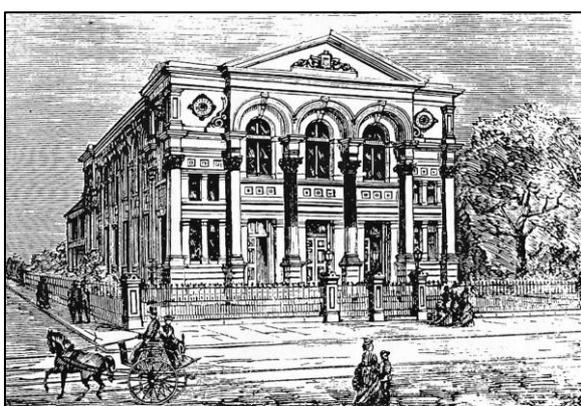
⁷ The three children who died were Alfred (1871-1878) and Edwin and Beatrice, both of whom died as infants

⁸ See Appendix 3

Queen's Road Wesleyan Chapel

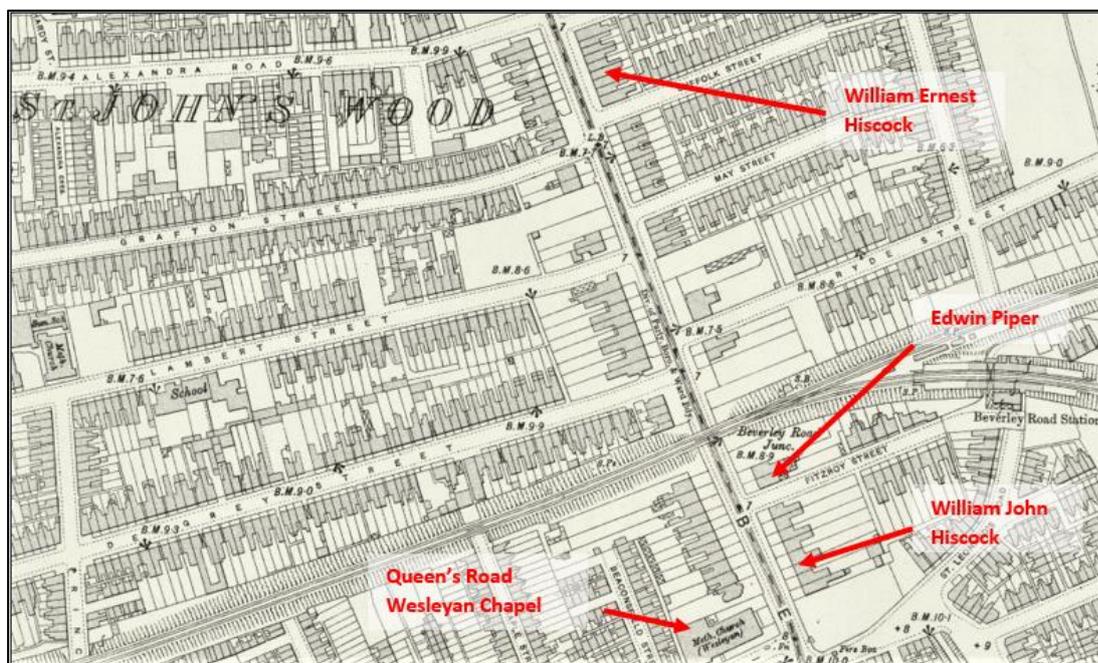
Queen's Road Wesleyan Chapel was very close to the homes of both Edwin Piper and William John Hiscock on Beverley Road and the chapel becomes central to our story at this point. A contemporary description of the chapel reads as follows:

Queen's Road Chapel is on Beverley Road, at its junction with Queens Road and was built in 1878 at a cost of £9000. The chapel stands in an excellent position and the interior is tastefully fitted. It is built of white brick, with stone dressings in the Italian style. It has a neat front consisting of three arches, formed by two circular and two square pillars, with floriated capitals, surmounted by a pediment.



A depiction of Queen's Road Chapel c1890

The chapel was a large building with seating for up to 1200 people and was expanded in 1892 to include a schoolroom. Damaged in an air raid during the Second World War, it eventually found use as a warehouse and services were held in the adjoining schoolroom. The chapel closed in 1967 and was demolished shortly afterwards.⁹



The St. John's Wood neighbourhood of Hull showing the locations of the homes of the Pipers and Hiscocks, and their proximity to Queen's Road Wesleyan Chapel

⁹ Lost Churches and Chapels of Hull, David Neave, Hutton Press, 1991, p49

The chapel played an important part in the lives of the Hiscock family. William John Hiscock was a much-respected member and became a lay preacher, often giving the sermon at Sunday services. He also became chairman of the Queen's Road Wesleyan Mutual Improvement Society, which held public lectures and debates on the moral questions of the day. For example, a debate in December 1887 entitled "Total Abstinence - a Christian Duty", attracted a large attendance, William John Hiscock being in the chair. Other subjects covered at the regular Tuesday evening meetings included, Reading, Friendship, Truth, Woman's Work, The State of Ireland and Faith in Relation to Spiritual Life. Outside of work, the life of William John Hiscock revolved around Queen's Road Chapel and this would have been the religious environment in which his children were brought up. At least one of his daughters was an accomplished musician and was often the accompanist at concerts held at the church.

Meanwhile, his sons had begun to assist in the family business, which was based in Church Lane, Hull,¹⁰ and this had provided it with fresh impetus. The business specialised in the import and sale of tea, fruit, rice and other commodities, which were sold on to retail grocery shops, not only in Hull but also as far afield as West Yorkshire.

A Hiscock-Piper Marriage

Living in such close proximity, William John Hiscock's eldest son, William Ernest, became friendly with the "girl next door" - Clara, Edwin Piper's daughter. A courtship ensued and on 26th July 1888, the following announcement appeared in the Hull Daily Mail:



Clara Piper and her sister, Jessie

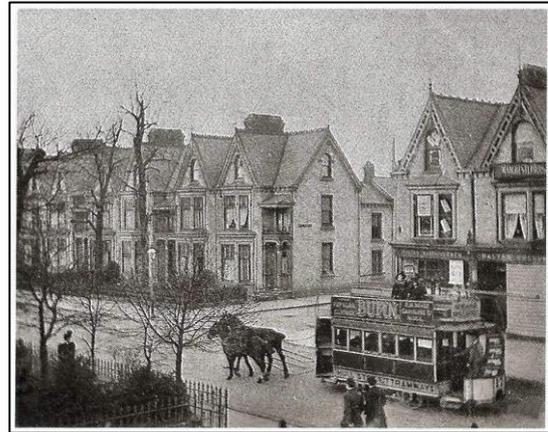
FASHIONABLE MARRIAGE AT QUEEN'S ROAD CHAPEL.

This forenoon, at Queen's Road Wesleyan Chapel, Miss Clara Piper, the second daughter of Mr Edwin Piper, Torrington House, St. John's Wood, Cottingham, was married to Mr William Ernest Hiscock of Rose Cottage, Newland. The communion table of the chapel was beautifully adorned for the occasion with variegated foliage, plants and flowers, which had been arranged by the keeper of the chapel (Mr. Thompson).

¹⁰ Church Lane ran between High Street and Market Place where it emerged close to Holy Trinity Church (now Hull Minster)

Although they could not foresee their future, the marriage of William Ernest and Clara was to be a significant development in the story of Westella Park in Yelverton.

Following their marriage, the couple moved into 4 Ermington Villas on Beverley Road, close to the respective homes of their parents. It is worthy of mention that Ermington is the name of a village some 10 miles to the east of Plymouth and, also, that Edwin Piper had mortgaged a property in Ermington Terrace, in the Mutley area of Plymouth, in 1873. This, therefore, is suggestive of the possibility that Ermington Villas, a terrace of eight town houses, on Beverley Road¹¹ had been built by Edwin Piper.



Ermington Villas (to the left), c 1900. The home of William Ernest and Clara Hiscock is the fourth from the end of the terrace.

In the ensuing years following their marriage, Clara bore four daughters – Joyce Barbara (1889), Winifred (1891), Kathleen (1892) and Clara Lois (1894).

A Remarriage

No doubt, William John Hiscock and his wife, Barbara, were looking forward to the birth of their grandchild when Clara announced her first pregnancy in late 1888. However, Barbara, did not live to see the day her new grand-daughter was born, as she died in early 1889 at the age of 55. Joyce Barbara Hiscock was born later in the spring of that year, her second name, no doubt, being in memory of her late grandmother.

Within a year of Barbara's death, William John Hiscock had remarried. His second wife was Salome Margaret P Rayner, who he had probably known from his early days in Kent. She had been born in Sheerness and their wedding ceremony took place in Gravesend. Salome joined William at the family home at *Rose Cottage* in Hull where, in April 1891, William's two daughters, Isobel and Caroline "Carrie" were also in residence. By this time, Salome was pregnant and later that year Annie Salome B Hiscock was born. Two other daughters followed: Christine Emma (1892) and Mildred Hetty (1894).

¹¹ All these houses are now converted into shops.

A Career Change

William John Hiscock continued to be assisted in running his business by his three sons, William Ernest, Charles and Arthur. In the census of 1891, William Ernest gave his occupation as 'rice broker' and was listed in Bulmer's Directory of 1892 as a 'wholesale grocer', whilst his father was classified as 'rice broker and commission agent'. Because of William John's earlier occupation as 'Italian warehouseman', it is possible that they were importing rice from Italy for distribution in Yorkshire and further afield. Clearly, his father had entrusted his eldest son with a responsible position in the company but, sometime during the mid-1890s, William Ernest decided on a radical, life-changing career change. He left his father's business and joined his father-in-law, Edwin Piper, in the building trade.

William Ernest (known to his family and friends as "Will") suffered from some sort of physical ailment. Edwin Piper in a letter to his mother in March 1894, wrote:

"..... I was hoping Clara would write but she has so many other things to do for Will and she has not been just the thing herself. Poor girl this last week has taken a little cold, I fancy. And worrying about Will too. He has not been nearly so well again. Full of aches and pains he can scarcely move sometimes. His limbs are stiff and swollen. It is a bad job he gets no better. I tell him he ought to go in for the faith healing cure. Nothing does him any good so far as the shape of medicine."

This ill health plagued him for some years to come (some family members recall him as an 'invalid') but he seems to have been able overcome his infirmity and create a successful career for himself in the building trade.

A Return to Devon

By the time the nineteenth century was drawing to a close, Edwin Piper had been in Hull for around twenty years and had developed a thriving business. He was listed in Bulmer's Directory of 1892 as a 'contractor' living at 354 Beverley Road, Hull. He, too, had been dealt one of life's blows when his son Herbert Edgar "Bertie" died in 1894 of a congenital heart condition at the age of 15. Two years later, his father, Richard Piper, died in Plymouth.

Around the same time, his brother, Frederick John Piper, had bought a plot of land in the pleasant village of Yelverton, some 10 miles north of Plymouth, on which he had built himself a substantial mansion to his own design which he



Merrivale, a modern-day picture.

called *Merrivale*. The plot was large enough to build a second house of similar dimensions and Edwin, perhaps wishing to end his days in his native county, was tempted by the prospect of returning to Devon and, so, made the decision to leave Hull with his family and go back to the area where he was brought up. He built a house on the plot adjacent to that of his brother

to the same design as *Merrivale*, and named his new residence *Hayesleigh*.

By now, Edwin's eldest daughter, Sarah Jessie, who had married a pharmacist named Charles Brighthouse¹² was living in Hornsea, but the remainder of his family moved with Edwin and Mary Ann to Devon. Frederick Stanley (known to all by his second name) continued his education at Petergate School in Tiverton. However, more significantly from the point of view of our story, Edwin's son-in-law, William Ernest Hiscock, who had become a partner in Edwin's building company, also moved with his family to Yelverton, living initially at *Hayesleigh*.

Edwin Piper's wife, Sarah Jayne, was suffering from poor health at the time of the move and Edwin employed a married nurse named Elizabeth Huxham Atwill to care for her during her illness. However, Sarah Jayne's condition rapidly deteriorated and she died on 29th March 1898, aged 51, from a type of cancer. She was buried in Tavistock Cemetery a few days later. As we shall see, her nurse has a further part to play in our story.



Hayesleigh, Yelverton, c. 1900. The children on the balcony belong to William and Clara. They were 'self-isolating' at the time, as they had measles.

Building in Plymouth

Edwin Piper began his career as a builder in Plymouth before moving to Hull during the 1870s. In 1873, he had been responsible for building Florence Terrace in the Albert Road area of Devonport. However, it was on his return to Devon

¹² Charles Brighthouse ran a pharmacy at 330 Beverley Road, Hull, for many years. For more about Charles Brighthouse, see Appendix 4.

that he began in earnest to build houses and shops in Plymouth. An initial application to build houses and shops on Tavistock Road, was rejected but he



Upper Knolley's Terrace, Alma Road, Plymouth, built by Edwin Piper.

was successful with plans to build sixteen houses on Alma Road on land belonging to Rt. Hon. John Lord St. Levan of St. Michael's Mount. This fine row of houses, completed in 1899, was named Upper Knolley's Terrace.

Undeterred by the initial rejection, Edwin Piper pressed on with new plans to build on Tavistock Road. These were finally approved in July 1899. However, it seems that he may have had some difficulty renting out at least one of the properties he had built. In 1902, after building had been completed, he wrote,

"I have let my corner shop on Tavistock Road and rooms on the first floor at 150 pounds. It's a low rent, but it's better than keeping the place empty. The King and Queen are coming to Plymouth next month; some are giving a guinea for one seat at a window. We hope to let some of ours in Tavistock Road."¹³

Clearly, Edwin Piper was hoping to cash in on demand for prime viewing spots to see the royal couple by those who could afford it.

Other plans to build may also have been in the pipeline but would not come to full fruition due to, as we shall see, Edwin's untimely death in late 1902.

A Name Change

At roughly the same time as William Ernest Hiscock and his family took the bold decision to move from Hull to Devon with his father-in-law, William also took the unusual step of taking an additional surname for himself, his wife and all his children. The surname he chose was Howard. Thus, he became William Ernest Hiscock Howard and his wife Clara Howard (without Hiscock). Their children, accordingly, also took this new surname, in their case, like their mother, dropping the name Hiscock. It is assumed that this change was made legally by deed poll, although no record of this seems to have survived.

¹³ King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra visited Plymouth on 7th March 1902.

The reason for this surprising change of name has, unfortunately, been lost in the mists of time. We are, therefore, left to speculate. Was it a decision taken by William himself or was the change at Clara's instigation? The fact that only William retained his hereditary family name is indicative of the latter, although we can be by no means certain. There is no indication that the family name, Howard, occurs in the recent family history of either the Hiscock or Piper families. Therefore, why Howard? It is unlikely to have been a random choice. Furthermore, was the choice of name a democratic decision or was Howard preferred by one or other party? In truth, we will never know the answer to all these questions. However, from many possible explanations for the choice of name, two are considered here.

The 1891 census for Hull reveals the surname of the next-door neighbour of Edwin Piper and his family was Howard. Charles G. Howard, a cattle-feed merchant and native of Derbyshire, a widower, lived there with his daughter, Maude, and his two sons. Charles Howard may have become a respected family friend. Clara was about the same age as Maude, so they may have been close friends. If either were the case, it may provide a reason for the choice of name.

Also, around this time, in 1898, a self-declared town planner named Ebenezer Howard had published an influential book entitled *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*. In this, he imagined towns in which the benefits of both town and country might be enjoyed in one carefully planned, low density housing community isolated from the crowded Victorian cities. In a more fanciful theory for William's change of name, perhaps, Ebenezer Howard provided him with a vision of the type of community he, himself, would like to build and, as a result, was inspired to adopt Ebenezer's surname.

These speculative explanations are two of a multiplicity of possible reasons for William's name change. Both may be considerably wide of the mark.

A Family Dispute

Just as they had been next-door neighbours in Wilde Street during their time in Hull, Edwin and Frederick, his brother, were now living next door to each other in Yelverton. However, by now, they had come up in the world and were living in grand houses in some sort of style. It would seem that they got on well with each other and, indeed, there was a gate between the gardens of their respective houses for ease of access to each other's property. However, the filial bond would soon be broken.

Shortly after Edwin and his extended family had taken up residence at *Hayesleigh*, the two brothers got into a dispute about a property in Plymouth they both wished to buy. They ended up bidding against each other in an auction for the property in which Edwin was eventually successful. After that, the brothers stopped speaking to each other and the gate between the two homes was firmly locked. Even their children were forbidden to play with each other. It is unlikely that they were ever reconciled. Although Edwin won the property it is said that it was always a financial drain on the family.

A Divorce

We have already mentioned the sad death of Sarah Jayne Piper in the early spring of 1898 at the age of 51. Almost exactly three years later, on 31st March 1901, the census record for *Hayesleigh* reveals that Edwin had remarried, his new wife being recorded as Maud Piper. Who was Maud? As we shall see it transpires that, in fact, 'Maud' was a pet name by which she became known by the family. She had actually been christened, Elizabeth Huxham, her maiden name being Lethbridge. If her two Christian names sound familiar, it is because she was none other than Elizabeth Huxham Atwill who had nursed Edwin's first wife, Sarah Jayne through her final illness. At that time, she was a married woman, her husband being Henry Atwill, to whom she had been married since 1881. Clearly, Edwin had fallen for her during the time she had been nursing Sarah Jayne and it would seem the attraction was mutual. But how did they come to marry if Elizabeth was already married? The only legal answer would be divorce, and Elizabeth would have good reason to end her marriage to Henry Atwill.

A petition for divorce from her husband was filed by Elizabeth Huxham Atwill on 18th October 1898. Henry Atwill was accused of being guilty of bigamy with adultery. It seems that Henry did not contest the case, and a decree nisi was granted on 30th January 1899. A further six-month period would have to pass before the decree absolute, which was confirmed on 7th August 1899.

Elizabeth Huxham Lethbridge and Henry Atwill had been married on 11th December 1881 at Parish Church of Sutton-on Plym. Elizabeth's testimony states that after her marriage to Henry Atwill, they "cohabited at the Washington Hotel, Millbay, Plymouth, and various other places in Plymouth" and that they had "no issue". Of Henry, she claimed that, "on the 3rd day of October 1898, at the Church of Our Lady and St. Swithun [in Southsea] in the County of Hants., a ceremony of marriage was performed between Henry Atwill and Louise Marie

Morin and that the said Henry Atwill thereby committed bigamy.” Her testimony further claims that “on the said 3rd day of October 1898, from that date until the present time at 44 Pains Road, Southsea, the said Henry Atwill and Louise Marie Morin have lived and cohabited together as Husband and Wife and have on divers occasions committed adultery with each other”.

In 1881, at the time of his marriage to Elizabeth Lethbridge, Henry Atwill was described as a publican and his place of work was the First and Last Inn, St. John’s Street, Plymouth. It is likely that he inherited the position as tenant of this public house from his father, Zechariah Atwill. However, at some stage between his marriage and the date of the divorce, he had moved to Portsmouth and had joined the navy as a gunner. When this move took place is not known, although in 1893, his name is not listed in Kelly’s Directory for Devon. It was in Portsmouth/Southsea that he had met Louise Morin. She was born in Dinan, France, but had become an English subject. In April 1901, some nineteen months after his divorce, Henry and Louise were living at 29 Omega Street, Portsmouth, with an infant son, Ernest, aged 4 months. They went on to have at least four more children.

After her marriage to Henry Atwill, Elizabeth had pursued a career as a nurse and in 1891, on the day of that year’s census, she was on duty at Torbay Hospital in Torquay, over 30 miles distant from Plymouth. Where her husband was at this time is not known. In the years leading up to their divorce, perhaps Henry and Elizabeth had become estranged. In October 1898, about six months after Sarah Jayne Piper’s death in Yelverton, Elizabeth’s address was 34 Victoria Road, Ellacombe, Torquay. At the time, this was the home of her parents, Christopher and Eliza Lethbridge. In all likelihood, Elizabeth had lived here during her time as a nurse in Torquay and was certainly staying here during the divorce proceedings which, as have seen, concluded with the decree absolute on 7th August 1899.

A Second Marriage for Edwin Piper

Within five days of the decree absolute being declared, Edwin Piper and Elizabeth Huxham Atwill were married. The Western Times of Friday, 18th of August announced under the heading of Marriages:

On Aug. 12, at Zion Chapel, Torquay, Edwin Piper, of Hayesleigh, Yelverton, to Maud, daughter of Christopher Lethbridge, of Torquay.

They were obviously anxious to ‘tie the knot’ as quickly as possible and marriage at a non-conformist chapel could be arranged more speedily without the longer residence and the process of banns required by the Church of England. Also, as we learned earlier, Edwin Piper’s religious leanings seemed to be towards Methodism, which would have influenced the decision. Zion Methodist Chapel may also have been the place of worship attended by Christopher Lethbridge and his family.



Edwin and Maud Piper, c1900

Edwin and Maud Piper returned to *Hayesleigh* as man and wife, she putting her former, unhappy life behind her and starting afresh with a new identity. She was now Mrs. Maud Piper, although why, like William Ernest Hiscock, did she change her name and what made her, or others, choose Maud? This is another mystery which at this distance in time will probably remain so. Maud had become a popular girls’ name at the time, prompted by Tennyson’s celebrated poem, ‘Come into the garden Maud’. Interestingly, Maud was the name of the daughter of Charles G. Howard, Edwin Piper’s erstwhile neighbour in Hull, who we earlier speculated may have been an influence behind William Hiscock’s name change.¹⁴

A riding accident and a trip to New Zealand

By 1901, William Hiscock Howard and his wife Clara had four daughters. Joyce Barbara was 12 years old, and her three younger sisters were, Winifred (b.1891), Kathleen (b. 1892) and Clara Lois (b. 1894). All the girls had been born in Hull before the family moved to Devon. At the time of the 1901 census at the end of March, they were all living with Edwin and Maud Piper at *Hayesleigh* in Yelverton.

In 1902, it appears that Edwin Piper had moved from *Hayesleigh*¹⁵ and was living nearby at a house called *Rosemont*. In all probability, this is the same house as the modern-day Rosemont Hotel, which stands at the end of a fine row of

¹⁴ In late March 1901, Charles G Howard was a visitor at the house of the Misses Sanders in Tor Hill Road, Torquay. This is close to the location of Zion Methodist Chapel. The reason for his trip to Torquay is not known.

¹⁵ *Hayesleigh* is now Ravenscroft Care Home but, before this, in the 1930s had become Ravenscroft School. During the Second World War, the house was used as the officers' mess for RAF Harrowbeer.



Greenbank Terrace, Yelverton (date unknown). *Rosemont* is the first house at the near-end of the terrace.

houses in Yelverton called Greenbank Terrace. It is interesting to note the architectural design this terrace closely resembles that of Ermington Villas on Beverley Road in Hull. Might Edwin Piper have been the builder of both properties to a similar design, and did he bring a small part of Hull with him to Devon?

Edwin was an enthusiastic member of a local pony club and sometime in 1902 had the misfortune to be badly injured as a result of being thrown from a horse. In order to convalesce after the accident, he took the rather unusual step of taking a trip to New Zealand. He and Maud embarked during the summer of 1902 and during the voyage he wrote what was to be his last letter, dated 6th August 1902. Much of the letter describes people he and Maud met on the ship and the food and weather. But he also wrote, "Of course, you know I have been more or less helpless and Maud has been a splendid help to me." Maud would, no doubt, have used all her nursing skills to care for her injured husband on the long voyage. She was said, by the ship's captain, to have been "watching Edwin's every move to see if there was anything more she could do for him."

The couple arrived safely in New Zealand at the beginning of the southern spring, but perhaps the trip had been too much for Edwin. Before he could enjoy the delights of the country and, subsequently, make use of his return ticket to England, he died on 12th October 1902 in Lower Hutt on New Zealand's North Island. His cause of death and whether it was related in some way to his riding accident is not known.

Maud returned to England alone, although she was accompanied by her husband's body on the voyage, and Edwin Piper was buried in Tavistock Cemetery on their return to England.

Edwin Piper left £88,065 in his will which was proved in late 1902. His executors were his two sons-in-law,



Memorial to Edwin Piper in Tavistock Cemetery

William Ernest Hiscock Howard and Charles Davidson Brighthouse, and Frederick William Murray, accountant. News of Edwin Piper's estate even reached New Zealand, as the following announcement in the New Zealand Herald of Monday, 9th February 1903, testifies:

It is announced that the estate of the late Mr. Edwin Piper, of Rosemont, Yelverton, Devonshire, who died on October 12 at Lower Hutt, Wellington, New Zealand, has been valued at £88,065 gross, including £13,119 in net personalty.

Further details of the distribution of his estate appeared in the Vancouver Daily World of 28th January 1903 and are shown on the right. Edwin's brother, Charles Thomas Wood Piper¹⁶, also a builder, had emigrated to Canada with his wife, Sarah, in 1885 and, it would seem, had made a name for himself in Vancouver. It was obviously felt that full details of Edwin's estate ('a large one') were worthy of mention in Vancouver, although it appears that Charles Piper was not one of its beneficiaries.

Fernleigh and Rockvale

At the same time Edwin and Maud Piper moved to *Rosemont*, William Hiscock Howard and his family took up residence at *Fernleigh* in Yelverton. This, in all probability, was the same house that later became Fernleigh Hotel situated in Greenbank Terrace.¹⁷ You may recall that, while in Hull, one of the houses occupied by Edwin Piper and his family had been called *Fernleigh House* on Holderness Road. It has to be said that *Fernleigh* is a frequently used house name, but it may be more than coincidence that this was the name William and Clara Howard chose for their house in Yelverton.

Following his father-in-law's death, William Howard took over Edwin Piper's construction business and became a 'builder and contractor' in his own right. In 1905, he applied for permission from the land agent for the Maristow estate to

ESTATE
Of Mr. C. W. T. Piper's Brother
Was a Large One.

Mr. C. W. Piper, a well known resident of Vancouver, has received word that his brother, Mr. Edwin Piper, of Rosemont, Yelverton, Plymouth, England, who died in New Zealand on October 12, left an estate which has been sworn under probate to be of the gross value of £88,000, including personalty of the net value of £13,119. His will, which was executed on April 10, 1900, with a codicil dated October 12 last, has just been proved by Mr. W. E. H. Howard, of Yelverton, his son-in-law; Mr. C. D. Brighthouse, of Kingston-upon-Hull, chemist; and Mr. P. W. Murray, of Plymouth, accountant. Mr. Piper bequeathed to his wife, Mrs. Elizabeth Huxham Piper, a legacy of £1,000 and his household effects; to his daughter Sarah Jessie Brighthouse, £250; to his daughter Clara Howard, £250; to his son Ernest Edwin Piper, £250; and to his son Frederick Stanley, £250. He bequeathed £50 to be divided among his servants; to his son Ernest Edwin an annuity of £275, to his daughter Sarah Jessie Brighthouse an annuity of £215, to his daughter Clara Howard an annuity of £150; in trust for his son Frederick Stanley an annuity of not more than £300, and an annuity of £200 to Mrs. Piper; and, subject to her interest, the testator left the residue of his estate in equal shares to all of his children when the youngest shall have attained the age of 21 years.

Details of the Estate of Edwin Piper: Vancouver Daily World, 28th January 1903, p4

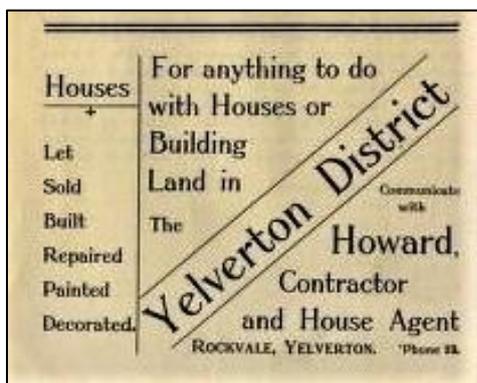
¹⁶ Charles Thomas Wood Piper enrolled in the British Navy in 1861 as a carpenter for a period of 10 years. However, he purchased his discharge in 1866. He emigrated to North America to join the Klondike gold rush and is said to have made and lost several fortunes during his lifetime.

¹⁷ *Fernleigh* has, more recently, become Yelverton Residential Home.

dig a trench across Roborough Down to connect a water main. This was to service a plot of land he had acquired on which to build a house called *Heath Cottage*.

By 1907, William Howard and his family had moved to new house called *Rockvale*. In keeping with recent family habits, it may have been a house he had built himself. In this year, he was advertising his services as a Builder and House Renovator.¹⁸ He and his family were to remain at *Rockvale* for around fifteen years. In March 1912 William was in the process of setting up as an estate agent, placing the following advert in the *Western Daily Mercury*:

YELVERTON — If you want to RENT or PURCHASE a HOUSE, furnished or unfurnished, write to W. E. H. Howard, Rockvale, Yelverton.



In 1914, William Howard was promoting his services in the Yelverton district as a Builder and House Agent as the advert on the left reveals¹⁹ and, by now, he would have had a team of staff to enable him to sustain his growing enterprise. At least two of his daughters, Winifred and Joyce, were assisting in the business by this time.

Just when everything seemed to be going well for William Howard, in late 1917 his wife, Clara, became ill and died at the age of 48. William was 56 years of age when Clara died and, three years later, he remarried. Lilian Mary Bolton was 43 years of age and a Professor of Music when her marriage to William Howard was announced:²⁰

HOWARD—BOLTON On the 20th Oct at the Wesleyan Chapel, Tavistock, by the Rev. J. L. Tyreman, W. E. H. Howard of Yelverton and Lilian, younger daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. Bolton of Hull.

William had, probably, known Lilian from his time in Hull, where her family lived at 210 Victoria Avenue, and the Boltons may have been members of Queen's Road Wesleyan Chapel. Lilian was a talented violinist and came from a musical family. Her sister, Edith, was an accomplished pianist and the two of them

¹⁸ *A Book of the Southwest: Work of reference for those who may be called upon to recommend a locality in Devonshire or Cornwall*, Printed for the Seventy-Fifth Annual Meeting of the British Medical Association, Exeter, 1907, William Pollard, Exeter, 1907

¹⁹ *Guide to Dartmoor; a topographical description of the forest and the commons*, William Crossing, Plymouth Western Morning News Co., 1914

²⁰ *Western Morning News*, Saturday 23 October 1920, p1

played duets together at public concerts in Hull. At one such performance, Lilian “delighted the audience” with her rendition of the Andante from Mendelsohn’s Violin Concerto.²¹ She also had other classical selections in her repertoire and many of her performances were reported in the local press. Lilian’s life in Devon as the wife of a builder would have resulted in a significant change of lifestyle but, maybe, she carved out a niche for herself in Yelverton and the surrounding area as a music teacher.

Meanwhile, back in Hull

When William Ernest Hiscock Howard moved from Hull to Devon around 1897 with his father-in-law and all his family, his own father, William John Hiscock, his two brothers and two sisters remained in Hull. His father’s grocery business was prospering and, aided by his two sons, Charles and Arthur, they had been able to build up a clientele covering a wide area of Yorkshire and beyond. Charles assisted with the administration and Arthur was the salesman ‘out on the road’. It is Arthur who is the main character in this section of the story.

Arthur married Emma Barrett of South Cave in July 1891 and the following year, their only child, Alan, was born. By this time, it appears they were living in Leeds. However, around turn of the century, they returned Hull and, by 1901, were living at 33 May Street, Beverley Road, Hull. In early February 1903, Arthur had been away travelling and returned to Hull feeling unwell. The Hull Daily Mail of 10th February 1903 takes up the story:

HULL CITIZEN'S TRAGIC DEATH. THE INQUEST. A SUDDEN ABERRATION.

In relating to the tragic circumstances of the death of Arthur Edward Hiscock, the inquest, held on Monday, at the St. John's Hotel, Queen's Road, the Coroner (Colonel Thorney), remarking on the pains in the head of which deceased had complained, said that he had been suffering very recently from a bad attack of influenza. The deceased, who was a commercial traveller for his father, was well known and a talented amateur actor, and lived with his wife and one child at 33 May Street, Beverley Road. Emma Hiscock, the widow, said that she thought her husband was aged 32. The deceased was away travelling on Wednesday and Thursday, returning home on Friday about 4.30 in the afternoon. The witness noticed nothing unusual about him; he had been ill with a touch of influenza, and he was a man of very cheerful habit. The witness had been told that her husband was in no financial difficulties, although she knew that he bet a little. He had not lost more money than he ought to do, because she had asked him that week, as she did every week. Betting was one his amusements; he never betted heavily. The witness had never heard him threaten to commit

²¹ *Hull Daily Mail*, 16th April 1902, p3.

suicide. On Friday night he had complained of pains in his head, and had suffered a great deal. The pains that night, however, were worse. The deceased did not sleep well on Friday night, and did not get up on Saturday morning, as was customary, to go to his business. The witness and her husband had their breakfast in bed, and he ate heartily, and appeared cheerful. He still, however, complained of the head pains. The witness last saw deceased alive at 10.20 on Saturday morning when she went downstairs, it would be about twenty minutes afterwards when she went back upstairs and found him with his throat cut. The deceased was still in bed, and the witness thought that he was still just alive, although was not able speak, but he died in a moment. The witness afterwards found the blood-stained razor. Replying to the Coroner she said that there was no one else besides the deceased and herself in the house except the maid, who was downstairs. The Coroner remarked that there was no suggestion whatever that the deceased came to his death in any other way than own rash act. The jury after a minute or two's deliberation found that the deceased had committed suicide, adding a rider to the effect that there was no evidence to show the state of his mind at the time. A brother of the deceased produced a letter written an hour or so before deceased committed suicide, asking that certain samples might be sent down to the office in order that he (the deceased) might deal with them. The Coroner remarked that this only made the case all the more complicated, for it showed that, at that time, the deceased had no intention of committing suicide, and that he must have been affected by some sudden aberration caused by the influenza.

This tragic turn of events must have hit the Hiscock family hard and it would have taken some time for them to recover from the trauma of the situation. We can only imagine the questions they would have been asking themselves about the circumstances of Arthur's death and discussing the Coroner's verdict on the motive for his suicide.

Nevertheless, the family recovered and the grocery business continued to thrive. In October 1907, the business was registered as a Limited Company:

W. J. Hiscock and Son, Ltd., Hull, has been registered with a capital of £10,000 to take over the business of wholesale and retail grocers, bacon factors, provision merchants, and bakery, carried on by Messrs W. J. Hiscock and C. H. M. Hiscock.²²

By 1910, Charles had taken over the running of the business due to his father's ill health and William John Hiscock, by now in his early seventies, retired. During the ensuing years his health continued to decline and he died on 19th January

²² Hull Daily Mail, Tuesday 8th October 1907, p5

1919 at the age of 81 years. His funeral was held at his beloved Queen's Road Wesleyan Chapel three days later.

Charles, who had married Lucy Beatrice Gibson in 1900 continued to run the business until 1938.

Charles and Lucy Hiscock had three sons, William (b.1902), Kenneth Gibson (b. 1906) and Brian (b. 1912) and, in 1929, there was a significant development which is of relevance to our story. On 26th November, the following announcement appeared in the Hull Daily Mail:

CHARLES HENRY MILES HISCOCK and FAMILY, by Deed Poll, dated 14th November, 1929, duly enrolled in Chancery and took and assumed the Surname HOWARD in place their former surname Hiscock.

There can be no coincidence in the choice of name. It is the same as that adopted by Charles's older brother, William Ernest, thirty years earlier. The name of the grocery business remained as W.J. Hiscock & Son Ltd., but now the two surviving Hiscock brothers had changed their surname to Howard, the Hiscock family name in this branch of the family was close to extinction. The only person to carry it forward would be Alan, the son of Arthur and Emma Hiscock.

Charles Howard died in May 1938 and the Hull Daily Mail reported the news:

Fatal Collapse at Hornsea Station. C. H. M. HOWARD, of Hornsea, well-known Hull business man and member of Hull Rotary Club, dropped dead at Hornsea station to-day. Mr Howard, who was in his 69th year, was on his way from home to his business, W. J. Hiscock and Son, Ltd., grocery and provision distributors, of Queen-street, Hull. He was thought to be in his usual health and his death comes as a big shock to his family, Hornsea friends, and Hull business circles. A native of Sheerness, Kent, Mr. Howard spent most his life in Hull and the East Riding. He lived in Hull before going to Hornsea. From there he went to Bridlington, returning Hornsea about two years ago. His residence was Runswick, Eastgate. A man who devoted great energy to business, Mr Howard had been a member of Hull Rotary Club since 1932.²³

Following his death, Charles Howard's position as head of W.J. Hiscock & Son was assumed by Alan Hiscock,²⁴ his nephew, and grandson of the founder of the business. Alan Hiscock died in 1967. W.J. Hiscock & Son Ltd. changed hands prior

²³ Hull Daily Mail, Tuesday, 31st May 1938, p1

²⁴ In 1939, Alan Hiscock was living with his wife, Gladys (nee Baker), and her parents at 29 Tranby Lane, Kirk Ella.

to Alan's death and survives to this day. A summary of the history of the company can be found in Appendix 1.

We now leave Hull behind us and return to Devon.

The Westella Estate, Yelverton

The land upon which the Westella estate now stands was once part of the Maristow Estate owned by the Lopes family of Maristow House. In August 1891, several parcels of land on the estate were offered for sale by Glanville & Son at the Roborough Manor Inn, Horrabridge, near Yelverton. The land being sold was described "as affording a great advantage to small capitalists" with two lots in particular being "exceedingly good and valuable building sites". These were adjacent to the Rock Hotel in Yelverton and, today, comprise the area now known locally as "The Ellas".²⁵

Who purchased this plot of land in 1891 has not yet been discovered. Before the land was earmarked for housing, there was an establishment known as *Westella* situated in Yelverton, which possibly stood on, or near, this land. There are a number of brief mentions of its existence in newspaper announcements. For example, on 5th March 1912, the following advertisement appeared in the *Western Daily Mercury*:

YOUNG MAN for stables; live in; unless total abstainer need not apply — W.
Priest, Westella, Yelverton.

Walter Priest was a 'carriage proprietor' and he ran a 'public conveyance' business. In the 1911 census, he is listed as living at *Westella*, Yelverton. His 'conveyance' would have been horse-drawn at that time and, hence, stabling facilities would have been necessary. Also living at *Westella* was George Jane, a cab driver who was employed by Walter Priest.

Walter Priest had previously lived at *Hayesleigh Cottage*, in the grounds of *Hayesleigh*, where he appears to have been employed by Edwin Piper as a groom.²⁶ Walter Priest was still in residence at *Westella* in 1919 when his occupation was listed as 'jobmaster'.²⁷ Twenty years later, at the time of the National Registration in September 1939, he was resident at Westella Garage. The garage proprietor was his son, William. In the second decade of the 20th century, horse power was gradually replaced by the internal combustion engine and it seems as though the Priests moved with the times.

²⁵ Why 'The Ellas'? Mary Osborn, Yelverton & District Local History Society, Journal No. 21, 2005, p10

²⁶ UK Census 1901, RG13/2117, p20

²⁷ *Kelly's Directory*, Devonshire, 1919; a jobmaster is a keeper of a livery stable; a man who lets out horses and carriages by the job or for a limited time, *Chambers Dictionary*.

There is also a further mention of Westella Stables in the Western Morning News of 4th March 1920 when a forthcoming auction of miscellaneous farming items and animals at the stables was announced.

However, earlier connection with the Pipers or not, the land eventually came into the possession of William Hiscock Howard. Although the coming of the railways in the mid-1800s had put Yelverton on the map²⁸, following the end of the First World War, access to motor transport became increasingly available. This enabled the picturesque village of Yelverton, situated on the fringes of Dartmoor, to become even more accessible by road. Increasingly, Yelverton became an attractive location as a commuter village for the businessmen of Plymouth. William Howard seized this opportunity and, “as a small capitalist” he took “great advantage”, and began to build the first houses on the vacant plot.

The first mention of the Westella Park Estate that has hitherto emerged comes in an advertisement placed by William Howard in the Western Morning News of 17th August 1922:

YELVERTON — HOUSES for SALE, from £800 to £4,000. To LET Unfurnished, at £84, Furnished, from 31s. Choice BUILDING SITES on Westella Park Estate — Particulars and photos Howard, Yelverton.

YELVERTON
is recognised as one of the

Healthiest and most beautiful
Residential and Holiday
Resorts in England

FOR
HOUSES, Furnished or Unfurnished, &
BUILDING SITES

APPLY
W. E. H. HOWARD
ROCKVALE, YELVERTON,
Phone 13
Building Contractor, Decorator, and
House Agent.

From this date, throughout the 1920s similar advertisements were regularly placed by William Howard in the local press. Selling points for houses on the Westella Park Estate were, “600 ft. above sea level, south aspect, mains water supply, electric light”.²⁹ Yelverton was also being promoted by William Howard as “one of the healthiest and most beautiful residential and holiday resorts in England”. One of the first houses on the estate was *Torlands* on Westella Road. In 1923, this house was occupied by William and Lilian Howard³⁰ with Walter Priest still occupying *Westella*.³¹

By late 1924, William was negotiating to sell his business. He was 63 years of age and probably looking forward to retirement. The business he had inherited from his father-in-law had brought him a degree of wealth and now was the time to

²⁸ It is said that Yelverton is essentially a product of the coming of the railway when a station was built near the old Elford Town Farm. The Devon dialectal pronunciation of Elford Town was used as the station name, hence Yelverton.

²⁹ *Western Morning News*, Tuesday 5th June 1923, p8

³⁰ *Western Morning News*, Tuesday 14th July 1925, p8

³¹ *Kelly's Directory*, Devonshire, 1923

slow down and enjoy the fruits of his labours. It may also be that the ill health he had suffered from earlier on his life had begun to catch up with him. On 16th January 1925, the following announcement appeared in the Western Morning News:

NEW COMPANIES: MARGRETT AND GLOYNE LTD.—Private company. Registered January 13. Capital £3,000, in £1 shares. To acquire, the business of builder and building contractor, W. E. H. Howard, Yelverton, Devon. The permanent directors are: W. E. H. Howard, Torlands, Yelverton, builder (chairman); Winifred Howard, Torlands, Yelverton, secretary; Stanley D. Margrett, Hightertown, Horrbridge, Devon, builders' manager; William B. Gloyne, Lowwell, Yelverton, builders' foreman.

All future promotion for the development and building of Westella Park and elsewhere in the district was carried out by the new company, Margrett & Gloyne. This continued until the start of the Second World War and beyond.

Despite retaining the position of Chairman of Margrett & Gloyne (with his daughter, Winifred as Secretary), William Howard moved away from the village he had called home for over thirty years, to the seaside resort of Torquay, some forty miles away. Here, he either built or purchased a house on Ilsham Road called *Brackendale*. This was located in the prosperous Wellswood neighbourhood of the town and it is here he lived out his final days.

William Ernest Hiscock Howard died on 14th December 1930 at the age of 68 years. His Will, proved the following March, showed the value of his effects to be £18,355 10s.8d. This was to be administered by his wife, Lilian, his daughters, Winifred and Joyce Barbara, and his solicitor, Frederick William Murray of Plymouth.

Lilian Mary Howard outlived her husband by a further fifty-four years and died in Devon in 1984 at the age of 89 years.

Westella

When did the name 'Westella' first make its appearance in Yelverton and what, if any, is the connection with the village of West Ella in East Yorkshire? This, after all, is the question that initiated this investigation!

The earliest mention of the name Westella in Yelverton discovered so far is in 1911, when Walter Priest, the carriage proprietor, lived at a property named *Westella*. According to the 1911 UK census for Yelverton, amongst the adjacent properties were Binkham Farm and Rock Chapel. A decade earlier, if the census enumerator followed the same path as his successor ten years later, could this have been the same property, known as Heathcott Stables? This was occupied

in 1901 by Richard Woodman,³² a racehorse trainer. A property named *Little Heathcott* stands today in the same location on the eastern outskirts of Yelverton opposite the track leading to Binkham Farm.

In the local directory of 1902, there is no property in Yelverton listed under the name 'Westella'. Thus, it might be assumed that the name came into being sometime between 1902 and 1911.

How did the name 'Westella' in Yelverton originate? Firstly, it has to be said that *Westella/West Ella* is not an uncommon name for houses and streets, both in the UK and further afield. There are houses named 'Westella' in various parts of England from London to Eastbourne to Yeovil, for example. The name has even crossed the seas – there are Westella Drives in Houston (USA) and Ulverstone (Tasmania); there is an area called Westella in Sydney (Australia), a township called Westella in New South Wales and a retirement home called Westella Homestead near Wellington (New Zealand). West Ella Road in Harleston, north London, completes this list, which is by no means exhaustive. The origins of this tradition must surely lie with the East Yorkshire village of this name.



West Ella Hall, c.2000

The reasons for the widespread incidence of this name are uncertain. The writings of the author and poet Anna Seward in the early 19th century may have had an influence. On a journey to West Ella Hall to visit its owner, Joseph Sykes, she wrote of the village, "I found dear Mr. Sykes at the gate of his paradise..... Westella, always pretty, is much expanded and by the growth of its plantations, so shadowed and adorned, as to be quite a fine scene..... with the vast advantage of the majestic Humber in front." From the late 18th and throughout the 19th century, the Sykes family wielded influence far wider than just in this corner of East Yorkshire. The abolitionist, William Wilberforce, spent part of his later childhood at West Ella Hall as the ward of Joseph Sykes, following the deaths of his parents. Wilberforce's close associate and fellow MP, Henry Thornton, was married to Marianne, the daughter of Joseph Sykes.³³ West Ella, at that time, was far from an English backwater.

³² Woodman's Corner, 0.5km from 'The Ellas', on the B3212 leading out of Yelverton towards Princetown, is the location of Heathcott Stables.

³³ Both Wilberforce and Thornton were members of the so-called Clapham Sect which was influential at the time.

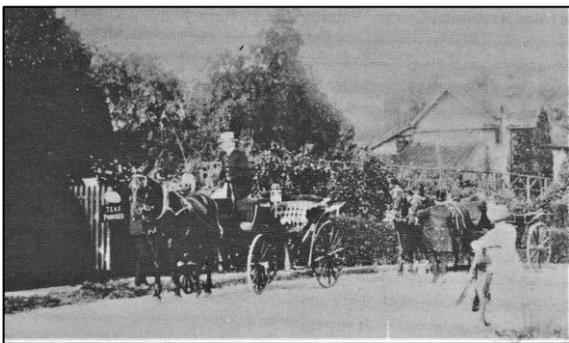
In the late 19th century, when Hull was a fast-growing, increasingly congested and densely populated town, the country villages to the west of Hull were popular, local tourist spots for families who wished to escape the town. Enterprising residents of these villages set up tea gardens to cater for the regular influx of visitors. West Ella was no exception:



West Ella, early 20th century

“The Tea Garden in April Cottage, [West Ella] was a favourite watering place for day-trippers and parties on ‘Chapel Outings’. The delights of taking afternoon tea in such a tranquil setting obviously appealed to city dwellers wanting to escape into the countryside. People travelled either by horse-drawn coach or by train on the Hull to Barnsley line. Passengers alighted at Willerby & Kirk Ella Station and walked the rest of the way along what were country lanes. Weather permitting, afternoon tea was served out of doors by uniformed waitresses. It was set out on little tables with crisp white cloths. Tea, jam and cakes for 7d, or 9d with a fresh boiled egg. Mr. Walker’s home-made ice cream, rich in cream and egg yolks was a favourite speciality.”³⁴

The ‘chapel outings’ probably took place on Saturday afternoons or on other holidays and we can be almost certain that regular outings to the ‘tranquil



Tea Gardens, West Ella, c1900

setting’ of West Ella were organised by members of Queen’s Road Wesleyan Chapel. Beverley Road Station, on the Hull & Barnsley line,³⁵ was a stone’s throw from the chapel and a mere two-minute walk from the homes of the Piper and Hiscock families at Torrington House, Rose Cottage and Ermington Villas (see map on page 6). One can almost visualise William John

Hiscock ushering the party of excited day-trippers into the carriages when the train arrived at the station.

³⁴ West Ella: Portrait of a Village, Avril Crosbie and Christine Thackray, West Ella Preservation Society, 1995.

³⁵ The Hull & Barnsley Railway opened in 1884 and its early years coincided with the period when the Pipers and the Hiscocks lived on Beverley Road, Hull.

We cannot be certain, but there is high probability that William Hiscock Howard and Clara Piper joined such country outings, both before and after their marriage in the summer of 1888, and if so, West Ella would have had a special place in their affections. This suggests a plausible reason why, after they arrived in Yelverton at the turn of the 20th century, they indulged in a touch of nostalgia and named a property they owned in the village, 'Westella'. It would then have been a logical progression to apply the same name to the nearby plot of land, once plans for the housing estate were being laid.

Although neither the Piper or Hiscock families ever lived in the village, is it possible they did some building work in West Ella? There are no surviving records to suggest this - the only building of significance that was constructed in the village during the final decades of the 19th century was the Methodist chapel. The was built by Mr. J. Kirkby of Swanland. The records suggest that the Pipers specialised in the building of town houses and it is, therefore, doubtful that they had any building interests in West Ella.

There were, among the large trawler fleet based in Hull, vessels carrying the name 'Westella', 'Kirkella' and 'Southella'. However, with no close maritime connections it is not felt the names of trawlers would have influenced the choice of name for the estate in Yelverton.

Without firm evidence, we cannot come to a final conclusion on its origins in Yelverton but there can be in little doubt that the name 'Westella' was bequeathed to the village by William Ernest Hiscock Howard as result of the time he spent in East Yorkshire.

Conclusion

By 1939, almost a decade after the death of William Howard, Westella Park seems to have been well-populated with many houses occupied. The resident at *Torlands*, William Howard's former residence, was Henry M. Wolcott, American Consul. Other houses on the estate had been given names such as *Linlathen*, *Overleat*, *Cornerways*, *Stone Hedges*, *Lyndhurst*³⁶ and *Stella Maris*³⁷. The name *Torlands* seems to have survived many changes of ownership and remains to this day. The name Westella Park (or 'The Ellas') in Yelverton stands today as testament to the legacy left by William Ernest Hiscock Howard and his wife, Clara, and forms a tangible link with their former sojourn in East Yorkshire.

³⁶ In 1939, *Lyndhurst* on Kirkella Road, was occupied by Stanley D. Margrett of Margrett and Gloyne.

³⁷ *Stella Maris*, next door to *Lyndhurst*, was the home of Arthur Penruddock a retired artist who, some years earlier, had painted a triptych depicting Calvary figures for Holy Cross Church in Yelverton. (Refs: 1939 England and Wales Register, and *A brief history of the church and parish of Holy Cross, Yelverton*, Margaret Davies, 1983, p17)

Appendix 1

W.J. Hiscock and Son

The following information, which comprises extracts from the board minutes of W.J. Hiscock and Son Ltd., has been kindly supplied by Andrew Willis, the current Chairman of W.J. Hiscock & Son Ltd. It should be noted that the early board minutes were written in flowing long hand which makes it difficult to accurately read some of the words. Also, time has faded some of the pages. The minutes, in the main, report share transfers, share purchases, dividends, and the appointment of directors, company secretary and auditors.

WJ HISCOCK & SON LTD

EXTRACTS FROM BOARD MINUTES 1907 to 1966

7th October 1907: William John Hiscock, Chairman and Managing Director, Charles Henry M. Hiscock, secretary. Three other shareholders: Mrs Salome H.P. Hiscock, Mrs Lucy Beatrice Hiscock, Miss C.P. Hiscock.

11th November 1907: Mrs Salome Hiscock appointed Director.

14th June 1910: W.J. Hiscock resigned as Managing Director due to ill health, C.H.M. Hiscock appointed Managing Director.

23rd February 1915: Mrs Lucy Hiscock appointed Director.

11th February 1919: Death of W.J. Hiscock reported.

25th June 1919: new shareholders, C.E. Hiscock, M.H. Hiscock, A.S.B. Hiscock, Isabel Hiscock.

12th February 1920: M.H. Hiscock appointed Secretary.

27th February 1923: new shareholder Alan Hiscock.

2nd October 1923: mortgaged 47 Queen Street Hull to London Joint City and Midland Bank for £7,500.

27th May 1924: Alan Hiscock and Alfred Walters appointed Directors. New shareholders, Mrs Sarah Jane Walters and Mr Alfred Albert Alexander Walters, both of 207 Newland Avenue, Hull.

28th April 1930: C.H.M. Hiscock, L.B. Hiscock, W.G. Hiscock, K.G. Hiscock change their surname to Howard to become C.H.M. Howard, L.B. Howard, W.G. Howard, K.G. Howard,

14th June 1938: EGM to confirm death of C.H.W. Howard. Alan Hiscock appointed Chairman and Joint Managing Director with W.G. Howard. Miss M.H. Hiscock appointed Director & Secretary.

1st March 1939: new shareholder Louis Bilton.

4th March 1939: Louis Bilton appointed Director.

10th September 1942: new shareholder Brian Howard.

8th May 1943: reported the death in March 1942 of Miss Isabel Hiscock, W.G. Howard retired from the board.

31st March 1944: reported death of Alan Walters.

1945: Shares purchased from W.G. Howard by A.H. Hiscock.

10th March 1947: the shareholders of "B" cumulative preference shares were Alan Hiscock, 29 Tranby Lane Anlaby, Brian Howard, 886 Holderness Road Hull, Louis Bilton, 23 Tranby Lane, Anlaby, Mrs Christina Emma Hiscock, 1 Westbourne Road, Hornsea East Yorkshire, Miss Mildred Hetty Hiscock, 1 Westbourne Road, Hornsea, East Yorkshire.

7th January 1952: sale of 47 Queen Street to Frederick Harker Ltd. for £18,500.

7th July 1952: company moved to a newly built warehouse and offices at 208/212 Hull Road Hessle. Building cost £9,500.

14th October 1953: agreed company be sold as a going concern.

23rd May 1955: reported Louis Bilton dies in May 1954.

27th March 1956: new shareholders Ivor Winetroube. Brian Howard and Ivor Winetroube appointed Directors.

1957: turnover £320,000.

8th May 1958: new shareholder Albert Garbett.

18th April 1959: Chairman's report states that W.J. Hiscock started the business in Sheerness in 1859. 100 years ago.

1960: turnover £439.000.

8th April 1961: Albert Garbett appointed Director.

1st September 1961: Miss M.H. Hiscock resigned.

1st November 1962: Alan Hiscock resigned as Chairman and Managing Director.

1964: the company joined VIVO the symbol group of food wholesalers.

1966: Shareholders were A. Hiscock of 29 Tranby Lane, Anlaby, Hull, Ivor Winetroube, Brian Howard, Albert Garbett, Mrs Bilton, Miss M.H. Hiscock, Miss G.E. Hiscock.

1966: the company merged with RT Willis (Food Distributors) Ltd., a VIVO wholesaler based in Barnsley, South Yorkshire.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS FROM 1966 to 2021

W.J. Hiscock & Son Ltd in 1966 held the franchise area of East Yorkshire for the symbol group VIVO.

R.T. Willis (Food Distributors) Ltd. held the franchise area of South Yorkshire for the symbol group VIVO.

The merger of the two companies was a takeover by R.T. Willis (Food Distributors) Ltd. of W.J. Hiscock & Son Ltd. R.T. Willis (Food Distributors) Ltd. swapped shares in the company for W.J. Hiscock shares for Ivor Winetroube and Albert Garbett. The remaining shareholders in W.J. Hiscock sold their shares to R.T. Willis (Food Distributors) Ltd. Also, Ivor Winetroube became a Director and Albert Garbett an employee of R.T. Willis (Food Distributors) Ltd.³⁸ W.J. Hiscock and Son Ltd. became a wholly owned subsidiary.

The depot at 208/212 Hull Road Hessle was converted to a wholesale Cash and Carry trading under the Value Centre name. The wholesale delivery

³⁸ R.T. Willis (Food Distributors) Ltd. was a family business formed before the Second World War and in 1966 the business was owned and managed by two brothers, Robert Willis and Derek Willis.

business at 208/212 Hull Road was transferred to the much larger, more modern depot at New Street Barnsley.

In 1966, R.T. Willis (Food Distributors) Ltd operated a wholesale business to independent retailers under the VIVO symbol, three Cash & Carries under the Value Centre name for independent retailers and caterers, and about twelve company owned stores under the VIVO symbol.

In 1968, Ivor Winetroube owned 7395 shares and Albert Garbett 4657 shares out of 120,000 authorized and issued shares of R.T. Willis (Food Distributors) Ltd.

The assets of W.J. Hiscock & Son Ltd were, over several years, transferred out of the company into R.T. Willis (Food Distributors) Ltd. and its other subsidiaries. Eventually, it became a company with a value of around £20,000.

Andrew Willis and Ian Willis, the two sons of Robert Willis joined the company in the 1970's.

Over the years the family of Robert Willis acquired shares from other shareholders to have full control of all the shares.

Ivor Winetroube and Albert Garbett both retired in the early 1980's. Both sold their shares by the late 1980's.

In July 1991, the company R.T. Willis (Food Distributors) Ltd. and all its subsidiaries was dissolved.³⁹ The thirty-one company stores, four Cash & Carries, and the wholesale business were sold to either Kwik Save or Costcutter.

Andrew Willis, after the liquidation of R.T. Willis (Food Distributors) Ltd, formed his own trading company, A.M. Willis Supermarkets Ltd. During 1991 it acquired the leaseholds of three former R.T. Willis (Food Distributors) Ltd. company stores. In the following ten years it grew to a chain of ten stores before selling the company to The Co-operative Group in 2001.

³⁹ R.T. Willis (Food Distributors) Ltd board minutes from 1st October 1963 to July 1991 are held at Barnsley Archives and Local Studies, Town Hall, Church Street, Barnsley, S70 2TA. Under accession number A/3252/B.

W.J. Hiscock & Son Ltd was bought by Andrew Willis on 8th May 1992, from the administrator of the liquidation of R.T. Willis (Food Distributors) Ltd, to become a property investment company.⁴⁰

In 1992 and future years, some of the leasehold stores operated by A.M. Willis Supermarkets Ltd became available to acquire the freeholds. These freeholds were acquired by W.J. Hiscock & Son Ltd and leased to A.M. Willis Supermarkets Ltd.

Since the sale of A.M. Willis Supermarkets in 2001, the property company of W.J. Hiscock & Son Ltd has continued to buy and sell property investments.

W.J. Hiscock & Son Ltd. is 100% owned by Andrew Willis and his family.

The company has a website www.wjhiscock.co.uk and a current value of £2m or £80 per share.

Notes

1907 W. J. Hiscock, Chairman & MD

Charles Henry M. Hiscock, Secretary, was his son

Salome M.P. Hiscock was William's second wife

Lucy Beatrice Hiscock was Charles's wife

Miss C.P. Hiscock was Caroline, William's daughter from his first marriage

1919 C.E. Hiscock was Caroline Emma, daughter from William's second marriage as were Mabel Hetty and Annie S.B. Annie and Mabel both remained single and in 1939 were living at the same address: "Howick" in Hornsea.

1923 Alan Hiscock, was William's grandson, son of Arthur and Emma Hiscock.

1924 There seems to be no Hiscock family link to the Walters. In 1911, Alfred Albert Alexander Walters, aged 36, was living at 207 Newland Avenue and his occupation was 'clerk, wholesale grocers'. His wife was Sarah Jane Walters, aged 45. It can be assumed Alfred Walters was an employee.

1938 William Gibson Howard was one of Charles's sons.

1942 Brian Howard was Charles's youngest son.

⁴⁰ The acquisition of W.J. Hiscock & Son Ltd. in 1991 was by "chance". It was the advice of an "old fashioned" solicitor to Andrew Willis. He advised two things:

- keep property separate from trading, and
- have a company with history and no connection in the name.

Andrew Willis knew that W.J. Hiscock was available to buy from the administrator, had a long history, and the name had no connection to Willis. He paid 73p for each £1 share, a total of £17,617.

Appendix 2

Elizabeth Huxham 'Maud' Piper

Maud Piper survived her second husband, Edwin, by almost 30 years and died on 23rd January 1930 at the age of 71. At that time, she was living at 1 May Terrace in Plymouth. She left effects to the value of £2140 administered by her executors Frederick William Murray, solicitor, and Ben Lethbridge (her youngest brother), naval pensioner, on 28th February 1930. Her property at May Terrace was offered at auction on 27th March 1930 as per the announcement below:

RE ELIZABETH HUXHAM PIPER, DECD.
1, MAY-TERRACE, LIPSON, PLYMOUTH,
WITH VACANT POSSESSION.
SALE THURSDAY, MARCH 27th, 1930, AT
SIX P.M.
PPETER HAMLEY and SONS are
favoured with instructions from the
Executors, to SELL by AUCTION, at the Ply-
mouth Law Chambers, Princess-square, Ply-
mouth, subject to the general conditions of
the Plymouth Incorporated Law Society, and
such special conditions as will then be read,
the very desirable FREEHOLD, Bay-fronted
DWELLING-HOUSE, known as No. 1, MAY-
TERRACE, at the corner of May-terrace and
Salisbury-road, PLYMOUTH, the accommoda-
tion comprising:—DRAWING, DINING, and
BREAKFAST - ROOMS, kitchenette, back
courtyard, w.c., small garden, and entrance
to lane at the rear. On the first floor, 4 nice
BEDROOMS, bathroom (h. and c.), and w.c.
There is a small garden in the front, enclosed
with iron railings.
The Property is in an excellent state of
structural and decorative repair, and has
electric light, gas, and water laid on, and
will be sold with VACANT POSSESSION ON
COMPLETION.
For further particulars and orders to view
apply to the Auctioneers, 11, Princess-square,
Plymouth; or
Messrs. WATTS & ANTHONY, Solicitors,
4, Princess-square, Plymouth.

Western Morning News and Mercury, Saturday, 15th
March 1920

What became of Henry and Louise Atwill and their children is not known.

Appendix 3

Ernest Edwin Piper and Frederick Stanley Piper

Edwin Piper and his first wife, Sarah Jayne, had five children in total. We have already met Clara, wife of William Ernest Hiscock Howard, and mention has also been made of Sarah Jessie, who married Charles D. Brighthouse, and Herbert "Bertie" Edgar who died in 1893. However, there follow a few details of the lives of his other two sons, Ernest Edwin and Frederick Stanley.

Ernest Edwin Piper [1876-1951]

Ernest Edwin Piper was born in Hull on Christmas Day 1876. He moved to Yelverton in 1897 with his parents and was resident at *Hayesleigh* in 1901



First marriage of Ernest Edwin Piper to Ethel Mary Jones, 1901 (Edwin and Maud Piper on immediate right of bride).

when he was working with his father in the building trade. Later that year he married Ethel Mary Jones and, in 1905, a daughter, Dorothy, was born. However, before his daughter's birth, Ernest travelled to the United States, finally arriving in Seattle in April 1905, leaving his pregnant wife behind in Devon. It appears that he completely abandoned his wife and daughter, and never returned to England. When the census was taken in 1910, he was

lodging at an address in King, Washington State, USA, where he declared himself to be single.

On 8th October 1914, Ernest married Evia Grace Shaffer, daughter of Alexander and Lydia Shaffer, Erin being fifteen years his junior. None of the Shaffers knew that Ernest was already married with a wife and daughter back in England. Thus, we have our second bigamist in this story! The couple went on to have at least two sons, the first born in Utah (Preston) and the second in Pennsylvania (Howard). Ernest became a naturalised citizen of the United States in 1918. He drifted from job to job during the early part of their marriage but, by 1930, had settled in Santa Ana, California. This is where Ernest died in 1951 and he was buried at Fairhaven Memorial Park. Evia only found out that her husband already had a wife and child in England after his death!

Frederick Stanley Piper [1883-1950]

Frederick Stanley “Stan” Piper was born in Hull on 7th July 1883, and, like his older brother Ernest, moved to Devon in 1897, where, in 1901, he was attending Petergate School in Tiverton. He went on to study as an architect and practiced with the Plymouth firm of King and Lister. In 1907, he crossed the Atlantic, perhaps following his elder brother, and settled in the Pacific Northwest in Washington State where, ten years later, he had become a naturalised citizen of the U.S.A. On 30th April 1913 he married Mabella “Minnie” Henrietta Bell, daughter of Charles and Anna Bell, at Boonville, Missouri. They established their home at 1600 Knox Avenue, Bellingham, Washington State, although, it was not until 1926 that their only child, Lawrence “Larry” Wells, was born.

In 1917, Stan was employed by Pacific American Fisheries as a ship’s draughtsman. He established his own office in Bellingham where he set up an architect’s practice. At this time, Stanley was drafted into the US Navy, where he eventually attained the rank of Commodore.

In his capacity as an architect, Stanley Piper’s first design commissions was for the Columbia School and this began a career in the Bellingham area that spanned three decades. He designed, primarily,



St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, Bellingham.

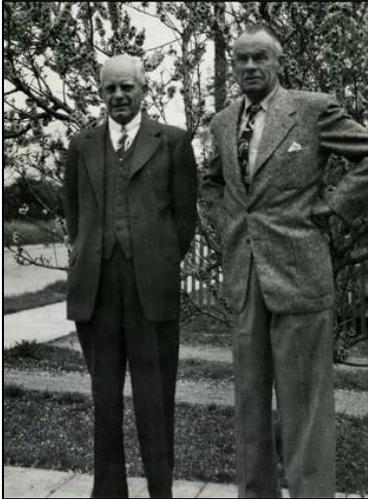


Commodore Frederick Stanley Piper, c. 1939

commercial and public buildings, though he also created some notable homes. His works include St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, Bellingham⁴¹, the Bellingham Herald Building, the Bellingham Fine Arts Building, the Great Northern Train Station, the Eldridge Mansion and Homesite, and the Anacortes Public Library (the latter three properties are listed in the National Register).

A competent and popular architect, Stanley Piper provided northwest Washington State

⁴¹The church has a stained-glass window dedicated to Stanley Piper’s wife, Minnie. Their son Larry was the first baby to be baptized there. His name is on the baptismal font.



Ernest Edwin (left) and
Frederick Stanley Piper, c1945

with architectural designs of great diversity and sophistication. His career is unparalleled in Bellingham.⁴²

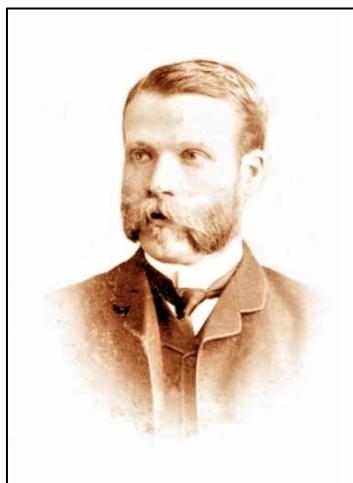
Minnie died on 10th December 1937 at the age of 47 years and her ashes were buried in Walnut Grove Cemetery, Boonville, Missouri.

When Frederick Stanley Piper died on 2nd March 1950 his body was cremated and the whereabouts of his ashes are unknown.

⁴² <https://www.livingplaces.com/people/frederick-stanley-piper.html> (Accessed 21 February 2021)

Appendix 4

Charles Davidson Brighthouse

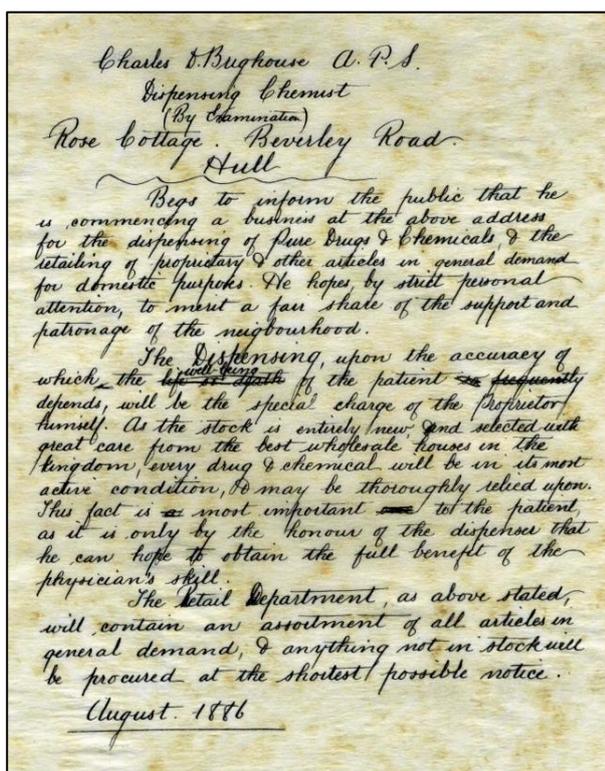


Charles Davidson Brighthouse

Edwin Piper's son-in-law, Charles Davidson Brighthouse, was born in Hawes in Wensleydale, North Yorkshire in 1863. By the age of 18, he was apprenticed to William Kemp, a pharmaceutical chemist, with premises at Stanhope Villas in Horncastle, Lincolnshire. By 1886, he had moved to Hull and was living at *Rose Cottage*, Beverley Road, the home of William John Hiscock and his family. In this year, he passed his exam with honours. However, at first seeing a list of those who had passed and not finding his name, he thought he had failed and told his parents. With

some relief, he later saw his name on the honours list. With this qualification behind him, he advertised his intention to establish his own pharmacy and his announcement can be seen on the right.

In the meantime, he and William John Hiscock had established a business manufacturing cordial water. This partnership was dissolved in 1891 following his marriage to Sarah Jessie Piper at Queen's Road Wesleyan Chapel in 1890 and the birth of their first child, Doris, in early 1891. They moved to premises at 330 Beverley Road, where he continued his pharmacy business. He and his wife had three further children, Charles Edwin (1892), Marjorie (1893) and Gilbert (1906). Sometime between 1893 and 1901, he and his family moved to Hornsea, where they lived for many years, whilst maintaining the pharmacy business on Beverley Road. Charles Davidson Brighthouse died in Pateley Bridge, Yorkshire in 1919 at the age of 56.



Appendix 5

A Mystery Inscription



This large engraved stone which sits behind the shops in Yelverton has puzzled local people for some time. The inscription reads H.P. NOVR 25 1890.

It has been suggested this stone has its origins with the Piper family and possibly that the initials are an abbreviation for 'H. Piper'. It also carries the date, November 25th 1890.

Research shows that neither Edwin Piper nor his brother, Frederick, were resident in Yelverton on the above date. At that time, Edwin was living in Hull and Frederick in Plymouth. A connection with Edwin is, therefore, doubtful, although it is possible that Frederick had some connections in Yelverton in 1890. Nevertheless, this still leaves us without an 'H. Piper'.

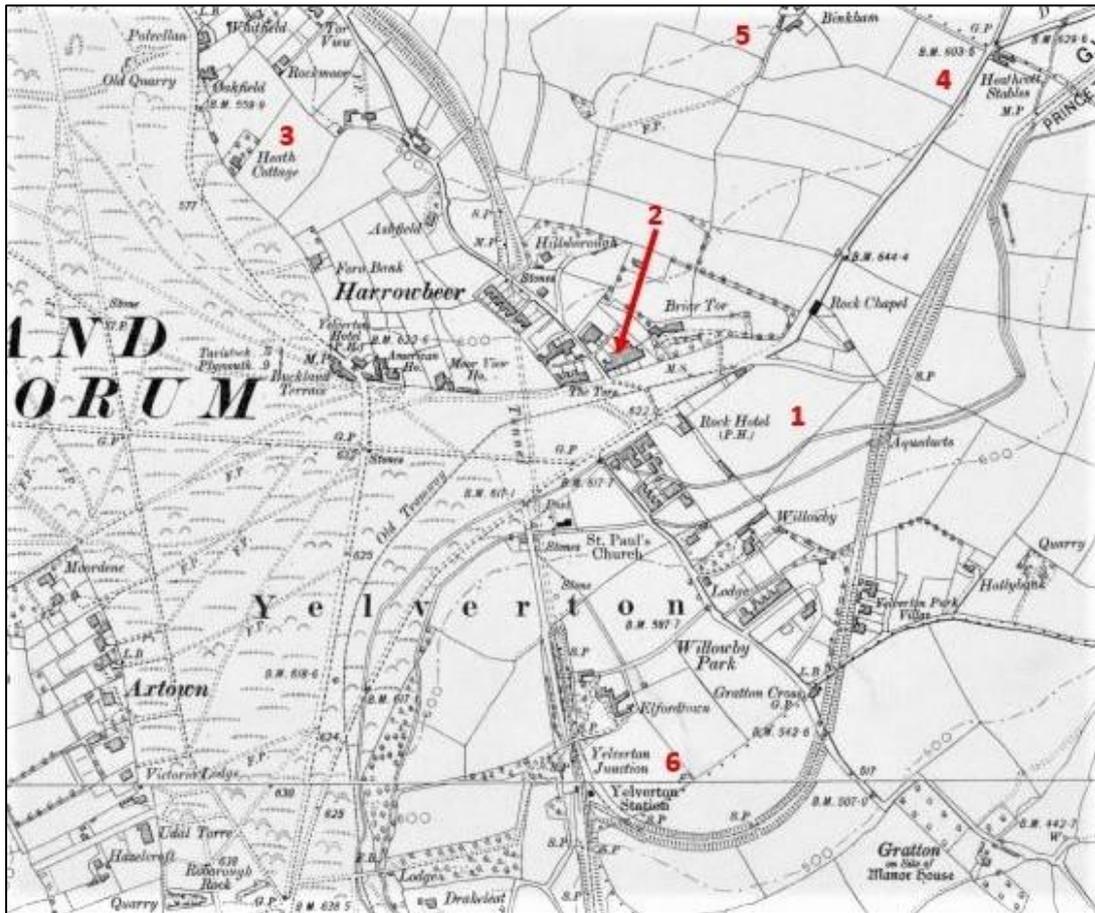
Frederick Piper and his wife, Margaret, did have a son called Harold Edgar, born in Hull in early 1877, who would have been 13 years of age in November 1890. In 1891, Harold was a pupil at Moorside School on Okehampton. He eventually followed his father into the building trade and was living at 'Merrivale' in Yelverton in 1901. He died in early 1908 at the age of 31 years.

There was also a daughter, Hilda Madeline. Her date of birth was 24th September 1886, so she would have been 4 years old in November 1890. She remained single until the age of 46 when she married David Bowen. Hilda M. Bowen died at the age of 89 in 1976.

Neither Harold Edgar Piper, nor his sister, Hilda Madeline, have an apparent connection with Yelverton in 1890 or with the date 25th November.

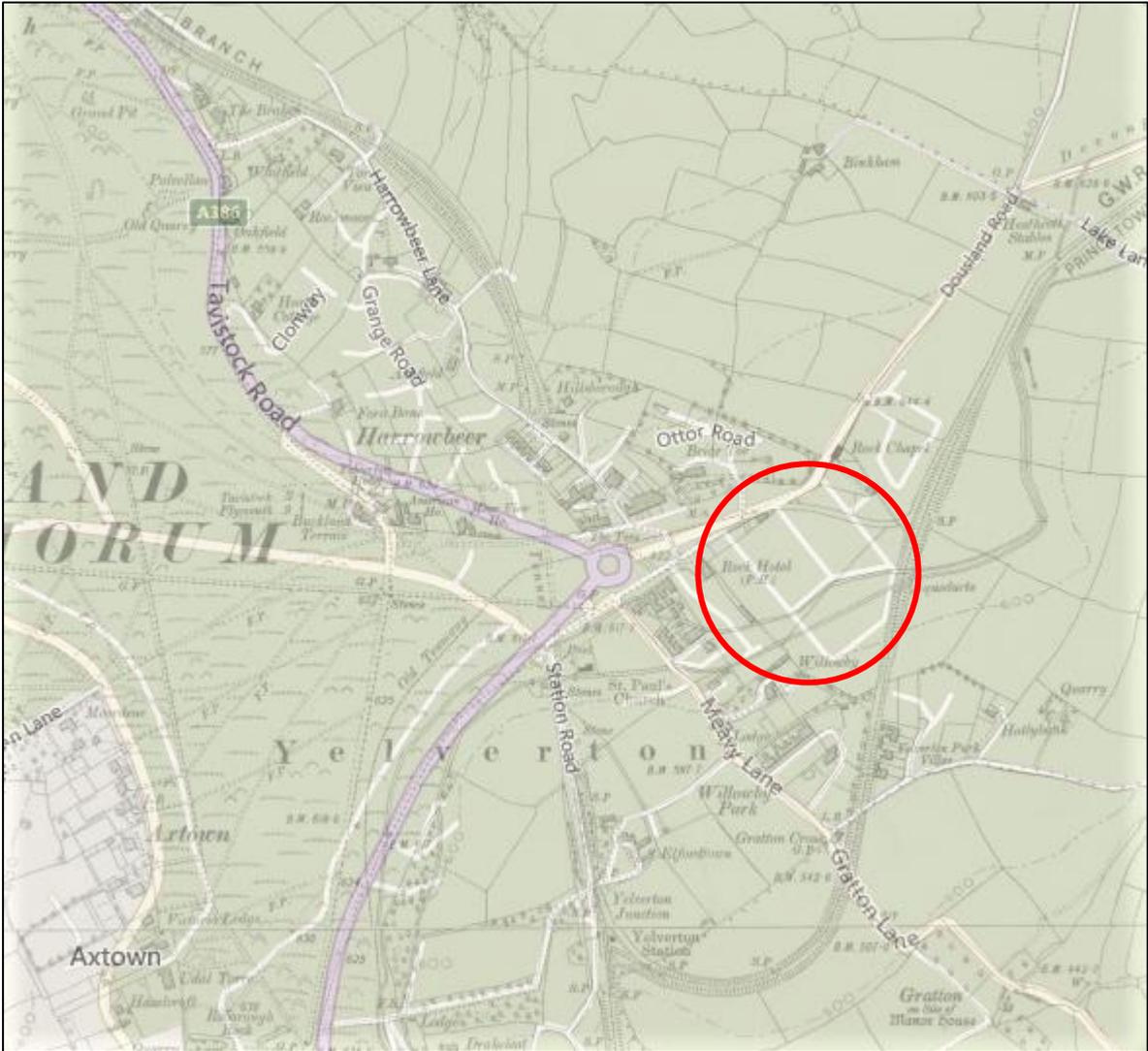
Another possible candidate for 'HP' is Henry Peter, who, in 1891, was the tenant at Binkham Farm in Yelverton. The farm was adjacent to Heathcott Cottage, which was the residence of Richard Woodman, the horse-trainer. Henry Peter had been an assistant to his father, Robert on the farm for many years and, between 1881 and 1891, his father seems to have retired and moved to the district of St. Andrew in Plymouth, where he lived with his daughter and son-in-law. He died at the age of 85 years in 1893. Can we speculate that 25th November 1890 was the date that Henry Peter finally acceded to the tenancy of Binkham Farm after his father's move from Yelverton to Plymouth?

Appendix 6



Ordnance Survey Map of Yelverton 1907 showing locations mentioned in the text:

- 1 Plot where Westella Park Estate would be built.
- 2 Greenbank Villas where *Rosemont*, the home of Edwin Piper, and *Fernleigh*, the home of William Ernest Hiscock Howard were located.
- 3 Heath Cottage built by William Howard, c1905.
- 4 Heathcott Stables.
- 5 Binkham Farm.
- 6 Yelverton Station.



Ordnance Survey map of Yelverton 1907 overlaid with a modern map of the village. The Westella Park Estate is located within the red circle.



Acknowledgements

Grateful thanks are due to a number of people who have made invaluable contributions during the research stages of this project.

Firstly, thank you to Tim Wilks, a member of the Facebook group 'Anlaby-Willerby-Kirk Ella - 20th Century Suburbia' whose chance comment that "there is a Kirkella Road in Plymouth" began the whole chain of events that resulted in this piece of research.

A big thank you, also, to Nigel Rendle of the Yelverton Local History Society who kick-started the project by providing a copy of "Why 'The Ellas'?", an article written in 2005 by Mary Osborn of the Society. This provided the names of William E.H. Howard and Edwin Piper enabling a way in to the research.

Bev Halverson and the late Nancy Gordy have been most helpful in providing details of the family history of the Piper family. Their many posts in Ancestry™ and subsequent correspondence, including extracts from the letters of Edwin Piper, have proved valuable additions to the story. They kindly provided many family anecdotes and also photographs of many members of the Piper family.

Andrew Willis proved to be the unique source for the details in the time line for W.J. Hiscock & Son Ltd. shown in Appendix 1. Without his help, this information would not have come to light. Thank you very much, Andrew, for taking the trouble to delve into the old minute books of the company and distil out the relevant information.

Last, but certainly not least, special thanks to Christine Gibbs of the AWAKEu3a Family History Group, who spent many hours of on-line research unearthing genealogical details of the Piper and Hiscock families and also in correspondence with descendants of the Piper family.

Many helpful websites have also enabled other pieces of the jigsaw to be put in place.

Any inaccuracies or errors are the responsibility of the author.

Francis Davies

March 2021