

Cecil and Oliver Turner and Families

In 1847 the land, which was formerly known as 'The Wilderness', was sold by John West (who owned West End Lodge) to John Robinson. The latter built 'Chestnut House', but he sadly died in the same year. John West became the owner, but it was soon sold to James Ogden, who was a grocer and draper, and he and his family occupied it for about seven years. They emigrated to America in 1857, since they had sold the shop, yard and garden to Rev. West Wayet for £650. On his death, in 1887, the property was inherited by his widow, Ann. Edward Turner was the next owner in 1888. He paid only £350.



Chestnut House, Knight Street.

Cecil Frederick and Oliver Inkley were the 4th and 5th children of Edward and Amy Elizabeth Turner. They lived in Chestnut House in Knight Street, coming to Pinchbeck in about 1885 from Barnack, Stamford. (They already had two small sons and a daughter. They had land in the village, some of which was the land on which Brownlow Crescent now stands. Mr. Turner was also a coal merchant, running his business from the station yard. He was also a Registrar of Births and Deaths for Pinchbeck and West Pinchbeck. Mrs. Turner continued to hold this position after his death in 1893, until the office of Registrar was transferred to Spalding in the late 1930's.



Mrs Edward Turner (centre) flanked by daughters Dorothy & Edith and sons (L-R) Oliver, Cecil, Charles and Ernest.

Both brothers served in the army during the 1914-18 War, Cecil in the Middle East and Egypt, later transferring to the Army Air Corps, which became the Royal Air Force. Oliver in Salonica, Middle East and Egypt in the R.A.M.C. During the War, Cecil met Miss Patience Greenland, a Red Cross nurse from Newfoundland, whom he married in 1921. In the same year, Oliver married Miss Lily Bittin from Boston.

Cecil Frederick

After the War, Cecil started a cycle business and later a transport business, using ex-army vehicles. He started business as a potato merchant with an elder brother, John. Cecil buying in this area, and John selling in London. One of their contracts was supplying the transatlantic liners sailing from Southampton and Liverpool. Cecil served on various national potato committees. He developed a great interest in antiques and also had a wonderful collection of various collectables, porcelain, ivory, snuff boxes and paintings etc. He was a member of Spalding Gentlemen's Society and was its President for several years. He was also a member of Spalding Rotary Club, his wife being a member of Inner Wheel. In about 1924 he bought the house, bakery, windmill and land on Northgate previously owned by Mr. James Sellers. From the time of his marriage until then, he had lived at Weston House, Knight Street - now Jelley the Butchers and Baxters Fruit shop. He then moved into the Mill House and continued his potato business from buildings and the yard beyond the Mill, buying ex-army huts to use, also all the cast iron stanchions and arches which supported the canopy over the platform of Pinchbeck Station. These are still supporting the same building which is now the front part of E. Toniolo's crate-making factory on Northgate.

During the 1939-45 War he was Commanding Officer of the Pinchbeck Platoon of the Home Guard. Soon after the War he first provided the shelter at the bus stop opposite The Bull, then built the two bungalows in Knight Street which are now run by Trustees. About 1955, he bought the bungalow on Spalding Road opposite The Vicarage, he developed a very beautiful garden there. In her younger days Mrs. Turner used to play badminton and was always a very active member of the Mothers Union and also a member of the Womens Institute. They had one daughter, who married Dr. Oetting from Philadelphia and they now live in Arizona and have a son and a daughter and a grandson and granddaughter.

Oliver Inkley

Prior to 1914-18 War he was a solicitors' clerk and in the Army he served in Salonica, Palestine and Egypt in the R.A.M.C. After the War he was a tax collector and farmer. In 1921 he married and went to live and farm at Glenholme on Glenside North. When Cecil bought the mill property on Northgate, using part of it for his potato business, the mill was run by Oliver to manufacture animal feeding stuffs and run a seed and corn merchants business. He and Cecil formed the company Turner Bros. Ltd., but it was Oliver who ran

that particular business. He had been developing balanced rations i.e. in modern terms, the right diet for animals, mixing them on the barn floor at Glenholme experimenting on his own animals on the farm. In the early 1930's the windmill still had all its sail and grinding gear in place, the sails themselves having gone either before or immediately after they bought the mill. In 1934/35 all this gear was removed and replaced by the then most modern machinery, to manufacture animal feeding stuffs in solid shapes, from cubes large enough for horses and bullocks down to the tiniest pellets for baby chicks. This business was sold to Tindalls of Holbeach when Oliver retired in 1962, he died less than 3 months later when he was 69 years old.

For several years during and after the War he farmed Old Hall Farm at Wilsthorpe owned by Cecil. He was a keen member of the British Legion, being Chairman and President of the Pinchbeck and Surfleet Branch for 18 years - 1932-50, also Secretary of the Benevolent Committee now called the Services Committee. It looked after the Welfare of the village ex-servicemen and their families. Cecil was also a member of the British Legion during the 1939-45 War, he was Liaison Officer between the civilian and military authorities. Cecil was also responsible for the poppy selling in the area (Pinchbeck and Surfleet). He was also food officer for the village and a stock of emergency food for the village was stored at the mill all through the War. At the beginning of the War he was Billeting officer for the village. Before the war, in preparation for the possible evacuation of the big cities, he had carried out a personal survey of the whole village to decide how many unaccompanied children, infants and mothers could be accommodated in each house. When in September 1939, on a beautiful summer day, the unaccompanied children arrived from Kings Cross area of London with their gas masks, carrier bags of belongings, looking totally lost and bewildered, they were led into the Baptist Chapel. From there they passed into the old Sunday School room, where he and his helpers allocated the children to the various households in the village. They were then taken out in a fleet of cars to the various homes; wherever possible, brothers and sisters were not separated. The procedure was repeated on Saturday September 2nd when mothers, tiny children and babies arrived. As billeting officer he had many problems to sort out over difficulties between evacuees and the village families. After a year or two, many of the mothers and children had gone back to London.

Together with others he formed the Darby and Joan Club in the village, he also enjoyed talking about the past to the older inhabitants of the village, unfortunately the conversations were not recorded, so much of the information gleaned from the older generation has now been lost. He enjoyed gardening, also a game of snooker at the Social Club on one or two evenings a week, but his main interest and concern was for the Baptist cause locally and particularly, of course, in Pinchbeck. He was Secretary for the Church for 35 years, a lay preacher and for many years a Sunday School teacher and was also a delegate to the East Midland Baptist Association. In 1934 he built 'Greystones' opposite the Parish Church

and moved there in June 1935 when 'Glenholme' was sold. Mrs. Turner was an active member of the Baptist Chapel and its various activities. She was also a member of the Womens Institute and during the War regularly served in the Forces canteen in the Cattle Market in Spalding.

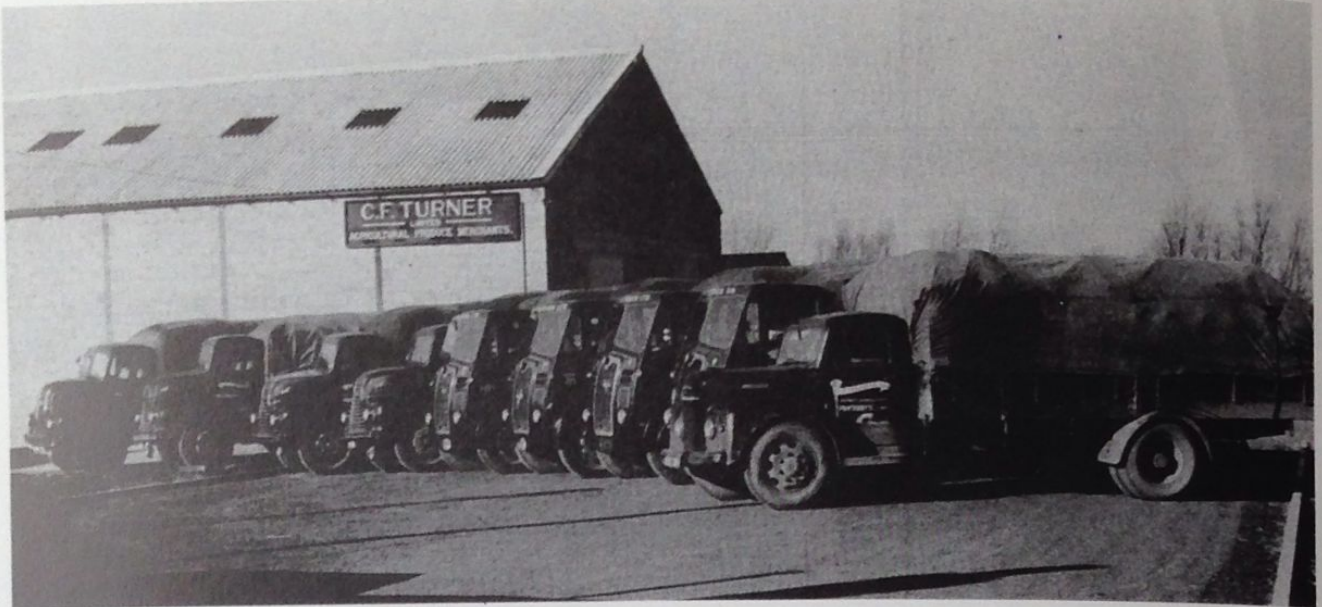


Miss A. Orbell (centre) was invited to open the first bus shelter in Pinchbeck. Also pictured (L-R) Mrs Briggs, an unidentified couple, Charlie Merrill, Rev J.M. Corley, Mrs Sturman, Mrs Bloodworth and Mrs Edie Maddison.



The opening ceremony of the Almshouses in 1962 which were erected and endowed by Mr & Mrs C.F. Turner to mark their long association with the village.

From left to right: Mr. C. Ford, Mr. S. Russell, Mrs. Russell, Mr. & Mrs. Brocklehurst, Mrs. Ford, Mr. Sutton (1st tenant), Mr. Maples, Mrs. Cawley, Mrs. Sutton, Rev. Corley, Mrs. Turner, Mr. C. F. Turner, Baptist Minister and his Wife, Mr. & Mrs. Scott (1st tenants), Mr. Webster (architect), Mrs. J. Bray, Mrs. Webster, Mr. P. Bray (for builders), last lady?



C.F. Turner Ltd., fleet of lorries in the 1950's.

A letter written by Mrs. Dorothy Whitlock (nee Turner) now deceased, to Tom Bray, who, until 1984, lived in Chestnut House. - May 20th, 1977.

"... I see the Chestnut Tree still stands. Before my parents bought it, it was occupied by a curate - Rev. P. W. T. Beechey - I understand he used to run a small private school - hence the Schoolroom which I think you have retained. This provided us as children with a splendid room for playing in on wet days. There was a fireplace in the Schoolroom - also a Slate blackboard attached to the wall opposite to the door. Adjoining the schoolroom was a coal house, a stable, a hen house, then a W.C. which had three seats in it, 2 full sized and one small one. (Mother, Father and Child) all boxed in. Cess Pit outside, covered as a garden. Ash Pit and Pig Sty. This comprises the outdoor buildings.

The property was sold at the Bull Inn, Pinchbeck on 14 December, 1887 to my father "Edward Turner of Pinchbeck - Coal Merchant for the sum of £350 paid to Mrs. Ann Wayet of Pinchbeck Vicarage - Vender Solicitors 'Maples and Son', Spalding". By this date I assume the first 3 children were born before moving to Chestnut House as the 3rd child - Edith Roberta was born on 6th June, 1887 - The other 3 would be born at Chestnut House. Cecil Frederick 1889, Oliver Inkley 1892 and myself Dorothy Amy 1894.

I think the back part of the house was a lean-to as I remember, when very young, the roof fell in and after that it was raised.

In the early 1900's the Schoolroom was used as Conservative Election Committee Rooms. The Candidates were Pollock and Mansfield. I do not know when the house was built.

The well in the kitchen was soft water pumped to sink in Kitchen. The outside was very hard (sock water) and pumped outside. The 2 wells were not many yards apart. We used the inside one for drinking and filtered the water through charcoal. The hard water was crystal clear but never used for drinking. I never remember either running dry. Where is that water now?

My father was a coal merchant - also had land all around the house - 3 fields coming out almost opposite the National School - he also did Land Surveying and was the Registrar of Births and Deaths. A Mr. James

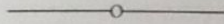
Waring was his Deputy Registrar. My Mother became Registrar at his death August 1893. I remember the coalman coming in at night to record his days work. We had at least 2 Shire Horses and Wagons. Registration hours, 2 mornings a week, 9 - 11 and 1 evening (Wednesday), 5 to 7 p.m. My mother had to go to West Pinchbeck School once a month for registering. Milk, butter and eggs were sold at the door and cheese in the summer when milk went sour. We had a well stocked garden, apples, pears, plums, red and white and black currants, raspberries, gooseberries and every kind of vegetable including celery and asparagus. A beautiful flower garden. I marvel today how it was done - but it was.

There were 5 bedrooms and a W.C. upstairs. Later the small bedroom on the front was made into a Bathroom and the original boxed in W.C. was exchanged for a modern pedestal type. I have a table made from the Mahogany frame of the original W.C. All the windows on the front of the house were originally sash cord - new windows were fitted in the early 1900's - Bow windows downstairs and upstairs as when you purchased the property I imagine. The place you call the Kitchen we called the scullery and our Kitchen was the room with the little window facing west. I think you have retained this window. Our Kitchen led into the Dining Room (on front) and a passage divided this from our Sitting Room - the passage leading from the front door. The stairs were behind the back door.

You ask about my operation for Appendicitis. This was performed on June 11th 1911. I remember it vividly. I understand the first operation for this was performed in 1908. Dr. Alec Walker of Peterborough was the surgeon. Dr. Hugh Power of Spalding the Anaesthetist. The operation took place in 1½ hours (how different today).

I was desperately ill for 3 or 4 days - the Surgeon was surprised to know I survived and I owe my life to Dr. Burton who watched over me with every care. He was only 29 and new to Pinchbeck and was determined not to lose his patient. He kept the Nurse in the house for 3 nights, much to the annoyance of Mrs. Royce who was Secretary of the newly formed Nursing Association.

My brother Cecil carried me downstairs and laid me on the table in our Kitchen and I was soon gone - the last thing I remember noticing in the bedroom was a text hanging on the wall "The Lord is thy Helper". The Surgeons fee was £10-10-0 and the Anaesthetist 2 guineas but Dr. Burton, to whom I owe my life, only charged £3-17-6. I was 17 years of age. I think my 4 brothers stood the cost as my Mother was not wealthy and money was not plentiful in those days.'



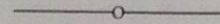
C.F. Turner in a typical pose.



Mr & Mrs Oliver Turner in 1962.

Local Press item - June 20th, 1911

Sympathy:- Much sympathy is felt in the village for Mrs. Turner and family. Miss Dorothy Turner has for some time been unwell, and last week suffered considerable pain. Dr. Burton diagnosed the complaint as appendicitis and on Monday Miss Turner underwent an operation at the hands of Dr. Walker of Peterborough, Dr. Burton and Dr. Power. The case was found to be a very serious one, and the patient has been in a critical condition during the week. We are, however, pleased to be able to report an improvement.



Free Press, January 12th, 1915

Interesting Letters

Recovered from a wreck, and delivered after many months:-

Miss Dorothy Turner of Chestnut House, Pinchbeck, last Tuesday received two letters which possess more than ordinary interest, they having been sent from British Columbia in May last, and being with the mails on board the Empress of Ireland sunk in the mouth of the St. Lawrence River, the mails being recovered by divers. They were written by members of the Evans family, the Rev. A. Evans being formerly Baptist Minister at Pinchbeck, subsequently residing at Spalding, which town he left about five years ago, and went out to British Columbia. There were two letters in the envelope, dated 20th May and sent from Kelowia, B.C. addressed to Miss Turner at Pinchbeck. The envelope received last week was endorsed (Recovered by divers from the wreck of S.S. Empress of Ireland). The latter had suffered no damage, but the colour had run from two little coloured drawings enclosed and a photograph of Mr. Evan's house enclosed with the letter had faded, this probably being due to the fact that the photographic print had not been finished off before being despatched.