

Hartington House

Until the 1960s there was a large residential house - Hartington House - on the corner of Osterfen Lane and Main Street.

Mary Bloom has written an autobiography and family history covering both her and her great grandparents and grandparents lives through the 19th and early 20th centuries and her mothers life from 1898-2000. She was evacuated at the beginning of the second world war to her aunts farm in Lincolnshire. Mary's great grandfather was George William Revill born 1863 and the family moved to Claypole to farm about 1870. George grew up and married Millicent Capp and they set up home at Clematis House a farm in Barnby Lane. Some years later they moved to the farm opposite, Briarsmeade and about 1907 to Hartington House.



Hartington House was basically a farm with a spacious and attractive house which was built alongside the only street in the village.

The house was an imposing eight bedroomed three storey Victorian property. It was surrounded on two sides by the front lawn and the tennis lawn, both enclosed by a lowish wall and railings, the latter having to be removed in the Second World War for the war effort. The third side was occupied by a large vegetable garden and the fourth had two orchards and the farm buildings. Opposite was a paddock with a pond where moorhens dabbled and nested



Mary describes many details of the house in her book.

“An interesting feature was Indoors, the bacon chamber - which led out of the bathroom for some strange reason - was a small lead lined room in which they kept bacon and ham when a pig was killed. This was on the north side of the house, so it kept cool, and yew trees also shaded it. The lead could not have touched and contaminated the meat, as seven out of the eight children lived into their eighties and nineties and two to over a hundred !! I think the lead was there to keep the meat as cold as possible and just lined the walls. I remember seeing a zinc bath with pork covered in cooking salt, that was the method used for preserving the meat.”



My wife Karen's great grandparents Mary and Samuel Smith worked for a man called John Lowe who lived at Hartington House before George Revill purchased it. Samuel worked on the farm and Mary in the kitchen. Mary Bloom describes the kitchen

“All the cooking was done in the ovens of the black-leaded range. There were two ovens and hobs, all gleaming and shining like jet, competing for lustre with the brass rail along its front. The fire glowed red through the bars, ideal for toasting with a toasting fork. Nine metal bells ran along the top of the wall opposite the range. These had been in use by a former owner who had employed maids. Up in the ceiling hung big hooks, upon which were suspended various hams.”

When Mary and Samuel married in the mid 1880s they were given a table and a pine cupboard from the house as a wedding present. That cupboard now provides useful storage in our dining room.



Some of the Revill family outside Hartington House

The house was sold, and for a while became a hotel which failed and eventually in the 1980's it was demolished and bungalows built in the grounds.

Many thanks to John North for the use of his photographs in this article and also to Geoff Collier and his daughter Naomi for use of their information.

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Claypole's Ideal Cottage, previously known as the Workhouse is the next article. If you can help please get in touch.

Robert Prabucki