

## Memories of Weir Lodge in Kibworth

by John F Tillotson



The Coach House had two floors included stabling for two horses (including a hay loft) now upgraded to two garages, tool shed and Granny Flat above.

The garden is mainly south facing with an orchard, fruit and vegetables in the kitchen garden, partly surrounded with a high wall also containing two greenhouses.

The old photograph (on the left) showing the

The character house known as 'Weir Lodge' is situated off Weir Road in Kibworth Beauchamp. It is now numbered '20' in Weir Road and is in the local conservation area. It was once known as the Curate's House, but the origin of that name has not been investigated. Weir Lodge is not to be confused with Weir House which is number 38A Weir Road.

The main house was built circa 1860 including the Coach House and extended circa 1890 & 1920 on an approximately one acre site facing east then overlooking farmland. Many Victorian houses faced east as Victorians did not care for too much sun! The house comprises five bedrooms, one en-suite, bathroom/WC and box room, on two floors, together with a living room, dining room, study, kitchen, scullery (utility), cloak room, playroom and cellar; the cellar is exceptionally dry, believed to be built on a sand like many houses in the road. Features are a Minton Hall floor, balustrade staircase, wide wooden flooring and large window panes. One could see the Laughton Hills from the upstairs windows.

façade with a gentleman in the foreground was, judging by his Edwardian style attire, taken between 1900-20. In 1974 the original kitchen garden was retained as part of no. 18, leaving approximately 5/8ths of an acre remaining. There was a well providing clear drinking water from a hand pump near the Coach House believed to emanate from an underground stream, possibly hence the name Weir? There was also another well behind the house providing water for washing. The weir itself was at the end of Weir Road to form a pond from which cattle could drink.

In the 1950 period before the Golf Club was built at the south end of Weir Road, the road was a cul-de-sac terminating with a cottage since demolished.

In the mid-1960s I can remember seeing Jenny Glover riding out of Weir Lodge on a horse, little thinking I would one day reside there!

When we married in 1968 we lived at number 8 Merton Way now the home of Mr & Mrs George Weston. In 1974 with a growing family we required a larger house and garden so moved to Weir Lodge, buying from Bryan & Pat Porteous

who still live at no. 18. They were excellent neighbours. They had purchased from the Glover family who, having vacated when the Paddock houses were built on the east in 1968, are believed to have bought from the Gray family who in turn had bought from the Grant family - I imagine the photo on page 1 is of a Mr Grant. The Gray family was that of Mr A S (Archie) Gray (a director of British United Shoe Machinery Company) who moved away to Cold Overton Hall.

We modernised the house rewiring, putting in central heating, new additional windows, mending the roof and adding shutters.

One day in 1975 I recall Fraser Gilbert, the Great Glen undertaker, came looking for a body in mistake for Weir House!

Another time a former occupant, believed to have been Archie Gray's son John, came requesting a look round the house.

During the 1976 drought we washed the cars and watered the garden with water from the well. One day a lady from the houses on the east screamed at me for using precious water so I had to explain to her that it was not tap water!

In 1980s the snow was so bad one could not drive up the slope in Weir Road.

On another occasion we came home to find the wooden climbing frame had been smashed to smithereens!

Having had the driveway re-tarmaced we returned from holiday on a hot day to find the molten surface came up on the car wheels!

In 1994 we sold the property since when I understand the internal lay out of the house and part of the garden have been reorganised and I was sad to learn that the mahogany kitchen we had installed, which would surely have lasted up to 100 years, is no longer there.



A more recent view of Weir Lodge

Collectively we have very happy memories of our 20 years living in Weir Lodge enjoying the garden and bringing up our family. In 2006 we built a house at the rear of number 10 Weir Road on Bromley's Yard after demolishing the barn. Ironically we were then able to purchase the adjacent former kitchen garden of Weir Lodge!

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