

MILL ROAD HISTORY SOCIETY

BUILDING REPORT NO. 20

The ‘Hicks Houses’

42–50 Covent Garden, Cambridge



The terrace of the ‘Hicks Houses’

Ian Bent and Sue Howson

The Mill Road History Society was formed in 2015 to continue the work of the HLF-funded Mill Road History Project (2013–2015). One of the Project's principal products was a series of twelve building or site reports, researched and produced by volunteers. These were published in print form for limited deposit, and on the website www.capturingcambridge.org. The Society has maintained this important facet of the Project's work, and the present report is the twentieth in the series.

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Cover image: The terrace of the 'Hicks Houses' 42–50 Covent Garden (photo: Caroline Bent, 2023)

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Also published by the Mill Road Society:

A Guide to Researching and Writing a Building or Site Report for the Mill Road Area
Ian Bent, Katie Blyth and Allan Brigham (2017)

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INTRODUCTION



Nos 42–58 from the rear with Fenner's cricket

The focus of this study is on the five houses on the west side of Covent Garden opposite the junction with Cross Street. They make up the fifth and final terrace to be built in Covent Garden, the first two terraces of which were Nos 21–31 and 52–58 (the two sides of the cul-de-sac) built between 1836 and 1845. The third terrace was Nos 22–30 with longer front gardens, built between 1868 and 1871, the fourth, Nos 2–16 at the top of the street, built between 1871 and 1876. Together these five terraces comprise 28 houses and make up the bulk of the street's residential buildings.

The houses of the five terraces can each be characterized in Stefan Muthesius's term as 'the common English row [or terrace] house'. All are built in local 'white' brick with stone lintels and cills, and with slate roofs. They are in keeping with the bulk of Cambridge terrace housing – that of, say, Romsey, old Chesterton, and Newnham Croft – though they are more austere than most, sporting no red-brick string-courses, terra cotta inserts and other ebullient features. The only concessions are the semi-circular white-brick door lintels of Nos 22–30.

At the time of writing, these and adjacent houses (Nos 32–58) are under potential threat of building on Fenner's ground by Hughes Hall, which could deprive some or all of them, as well as several houses on Glisson Road, of their prize asset: their view of the cricket field, and of light, privacy and quiet. Other losers would be the cricketers themselves: the view in the picture above has changed very little over the past 100 years, and much of its tranquillity and charm would be lost were new buildings to be erected on that side of Fenner's.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, Caroline Bent spent many hours in the Cambridgeshire County Archive and the Cambridge City Library in 2010–11, researching early maps, transcribing street directories, Land Tax Assessments, Poor Rate Records, Improvement Commission Books and numerous house deeds, photocopying auction notices, newspaper advertisements and historical articles, and tracing and interviewing former residents. Some of this material was incorporated into a brochure for the 2010 Covent Garden street party, and then into an illustrated booklet (joint with Ian Bent) later that year. Her work formed the basis of the present report.

We are grateful to the staff of the County Archive – especially Melissa McGreechan – and the librarians of the Cambridgeshire Collection for their assistance; to Graham, Sue and David Sennitt, James McNiven and Laura Messenger, who made their house deeds available to us; and Malcolm Taylor and James McNiven, who supplied architects' plans of alterations to Nos 44, 46 and 50. It was availability of the full set of deeds for No. 48 that prompted the authors to embark on the present report. Our gratitude goes also to Michael Marshall, Barbara Rooney, Margaret Squires and others who provided childhood recollections of the street and its former residents, to Judy Lester for genealogical support and research into several previous residents of the terrace, and to Claire Martinsen for genealogical work done for the Mill Road Cemetery website. Thanks are due also to Simon Middleton of the Mill Road History Society for creating the outline images of houses in chapter 2.

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CHAPTER 1

THE LAND AND ITS OWNERSHIP

In 1800 the town of Cambridge was surrounded by common fields, that is land 'held in common' grazed or farmed by the common people, as it had been for centuries; those on the east were known as the Barnwell Fields and that to the east of Parker's Piece and between what are now Hills Road and Mill Road was known as Middle Field (Maitland, pp. 106/107). Enclosure of the commons, that is allocation of the land to individual owners, took place in Cambridgeshire between 1775 and 1840. The Enclosure Act for the Parish of St Andrew the Less in the Borough of Cambridge was passed in Parliament in 1807 and the Award under the Act made in 1811. (The church of St Andrew the Less on Newmarket Road, now disused, was built in the 13th century as the chapel of the Augustinian Barnwell Priory which became an Anglican parish church in 1599). An Enclosure Map of 1812 for Barnwell (see Fig. 1) shows that most of Middle Field was allotted to Gonville and Caius College. Apart from four acres of common pasture adjacent to Parker's Piece there were allotments of 1-3-16 (1 acre 3 roods and 16 perches)¹ to G.G. Humfrey around his mill (on the site of the shops 56-56A Mill Road) and 17-2-37 to the 'person or persons entitled to the Estate of the late Thomas Panton Esquire'. Thomas Panton the Younger (born 1731) had died at Newmarket in 1808, having lived as a country gentleman in Fen Ditton and been well-known as an owner of racehorses, one of which won the Derby in 1786 (Dictionary of National Biography).



Figure 1 – Enclosure map of 1812 (detail) (Cambridgeshire Archives)

The map of 1813 (see Fig. 2) shows that George Gobbett Humfrey has extended his land southwards (down to just beyond what is now Cross Street) to 3-3-17. To the west of this land are two plots of 2-0-34 owned by Jeremiah Rushbrook and, adjacent to Humfrey's land, by Thomas Safford; to the east of this land a larger plot owned by Charles Humfrey, the older brother of George Humfrey. (Their father had built the mill on land leased from the Cambridge Corporation; the younger son had bought the mill on the death of his father.)² It is on Safford's land

1. One acre comprises 43,560 square feet; 1 acre = 4 roods; 1 rood = 40 perches.
2. For the history of the mill, see Brigham, Clark and Filby (2015).

that Covent Garden (the street and the houses on both sides) was developed.



Figure 2 – Enclosure map of 1813 (detail) (Cambridgeshire Archives)

The street with a sprinkling of houses appears first on Richard Grey Baker's 1830 map of Cambridge.

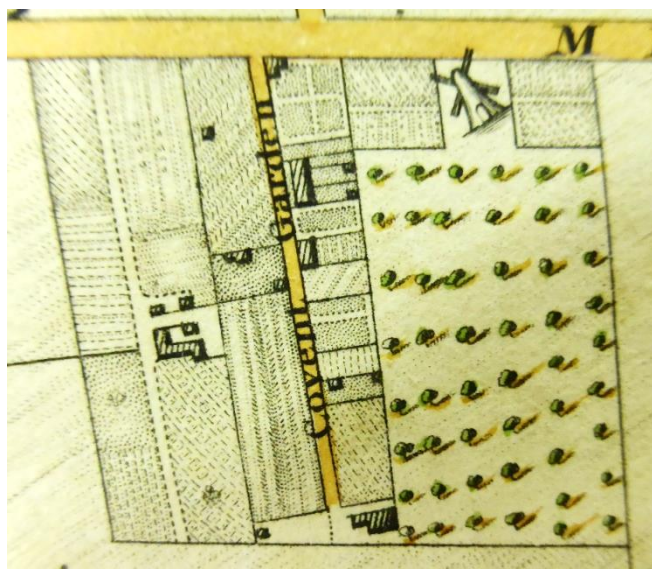


Figure 3 – Baker's map of 1830 (detail) (Cambridgeshire Archives)

Rushbrook's land is undeveloped, George Humfrey's land, apart from the mill, appears to be an orchard. The map also shows Mill Road and, north of it, the University Cricket Ground where the Mill Road Cemetery now is.

The younger Thomas Panton had no children. Since his sister Mary had married Peregrine Bertie 3rd Duke of Ancaster and Kesteven and their daughter Priscilla married Peter Burrell 1st Baron Gwydir (1754–1820), the land passed to his niece so that the persons entitled to his estate included Lord Gwydir and Lady Priscilla and their eldest son Peter Robert Drummond Burrell. These three

did on the 9th of November 1809 put several of the Estates in Barnwell [...] up for Sale by Public Auction [...] Tho. Safford was the highest bidder & purchaser of the piece of Land thereafter described at or for the price of Sum of £250[.]

The sale took effect on 24/25 April 1810 when Safford is described as 'Innkeeper & White-smith'.³

Safford died in 1831. In his will (29 January 1828), after bequeathing other land (in Colworth in Bedfordshire) that he owned to his brothers John and William Safford, household furniture etc to his wife and after her death to his daughter-in-law Harriet Lee and nephew Thomas Safford (including 'all the wine that may be left at the decease of my wife to be equally divided between them share and share alike'), Safford had instructed his friend George Warren ('of Merton Hall in the Town of Cambridge Gentleman') and his son-in-law John Lee ('Merchants Clerk') to sell the remainder of the estate, the proceeds to be allocated in specific ways to various members of the family.

When the land was sold in December 1836 Matthew Seymour 'of Cambridge, Carpenter' (1800–60) became the owner of a

parcel of land or building ground being part of a close of land containing 2 acres and 34 perches lying in Mill Field in the Parish of St Andrew the Less in Cambridge aforesaid purchased by Thomas Safford of the Right Honourable Peter Lord Gwydir and others situate and being in a certain place now called Covent Garden in Cambridge aforesaid and adjoining premises now belonging to Frederick Rushbrook containing in the front thereof next the road there 165 feet and averaging in depth from 77 feet to 75 feet [and a piece of land] on the opposite side of the said road[.]

When Seymour (now described as a publican) leased some of his several properties in 1847 to 'Edmond Foster ... Gentleman', the lease included 'the cottage or tenements erected upon some part or parts of the said piece of Ground'. (The Cambridge University Cricket & Athletic Club used its Barnwell Ground between 1821 and 1830 and then played on Parker's Piece when that had been improved by levelling. It moved to its present location in 1848 after Francis Fenner had leased land from Gonville and Caius College for the purpose and also acquired the adjacent Rushbrook land. In 1895 the College sold Fenner's to the cricket club for £17,500, with certain restrictions on building. The Mill Road Cemetery was consecrated in 1848 as a burial place for thirteen city centre parishes.)

3. This and other quotations come from the surviving deeds or 'indentures' or 'conveyances'. By 'deed' is meant a legal document which, before compulsory registration with the Land Registry (created 1862) was introduced in 1990, proved or transferred ownership of ('title to') property. A deed or indenture of a certain date often summarized ('recited') previous legal documents.

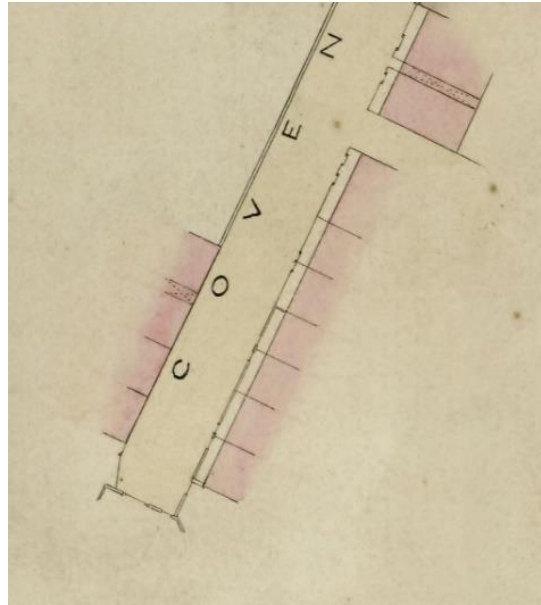


Figure 4 – Rowe map of 1858: detail: Covent Garden, south end
(Cambridgeshire Archives)

There were further changes in ownership of the 'piece of building ground (theretofore part of a close of land containing 2 acres and 34 four perches lying in Mill Field in the Parish of St Andrew the Less in the Town of Cambridge)' in 1852 and 1864. Matthew Seymour had borrowed £600 from William Bishop on the security of the land. (Bishop may have been the Cambridge draper buried in Mill Road Cemetery who served as Mayor in 1844-45 and died in 1866 a wealthy man.) When he defaulted on the debt the land passed to Bishop. As the legal document records, on 14 December 1852 'in consideration of the sum of £600 to the said Matthew Seymour lent by the said William Bishop the said Matthew Seymour appointed and conveyed [... the land] unto and to the use of the said William Bishop his heirs and assigns' subject to provisos for redemption on payment of £600 with interest and the case of default. In 1864 William Bishop put the land up for sale by public auction in three lots on 21 April, 'at which sale the said George Salmon was the highest bidder for and became the Purchaser of Lots 2 and 3 at the price of £438 : 18 : 0'. The lots bought by George Salmon comprise the plots on which what became Nos 52–58 Covent Garden had already been built and on which the Hicks houses Nos 42–50 were built later. (These transactions are all recorded in identical language in deeds for Nos 46, 48 and 52–58.)

George Salmon (also a Cambridge draper and long-time church warden at St Mary the Less) comes into the story because he was a trustee of the marriage settlement of Robert Stott Naylor (a stonemason) and Sarah Redfarn who had married in 1830. (In the absence of such a settlement a wife's property was the property of her husband before the passage of the Married Women's Property Acts of 1870 and 1882. The 1870 Act allowed her to keep wages and property earned from her own work or by inheritance; the 1882 Act extended this to all her property.) In this settlement 'IT was agreed that the said James Hart and George Salmon should hold a certain sum of £1000 to which the said Sarah Redfarn was then entitled under a certain Will and which sums were thereby assigned into the said James Hart and George Salmon their executors administrators and assigns upon the trusts therein mentioned'. James Hart had died in 1851. In June 1864 Robert and Sarah Naylor had 'in pursuance of the power contained in the Indenture of Settlement thereby jointly limited and appointed the fund therein in favour of

their Children ... Robert Redfarn Naylor and Thomas Hargrave Naylor' and had also a few weeks earlier asked George Salmon as a trustee to purchase 'certain hereditaments situate in Covent Garden'. In April 1864 Salmon also made a will making his brother-in-law James Benjamin Harper and his nephews John Salmon (a draper in Colchester) and George Wallis (a surgeon at Addenbrooke's hospital) his executors and trustees and leaving them 'ALL the estate which should at the time of his decease be vested in him upon any trusts or by way of mortgage'.

George Salmon died in March 1867 and James Benjamin Harper in April 1873. Robert Naylor died in December 1867 and his widow took the surviving trustees to court. On 21 July 1885 – after her death in October 1884 – the High Court ruled in her favour that 'the said hereditaments were expressed with an implied trust for the reconversion thereof and were personal estate and that the Defendants the said John Salmon the said George Wallis the surviving devisees of the trust estates of the said George Salmon have and ought to exercise a power of sale over the same' and ordered Salmon and Wallis to sell the land with the proceeds to go to Mrs Redfarn. The land was auctioned at the Red Lion Hotel in Cambridge on 9 October 1885 in 6 lots, 1 being 52-58 Covent Garden, 2 to 6 building plots. George Adams Wallis (described as a 'Gentleman' but he may have been the retired butcher buried in Mill Road Cemetery) was the highest bidder at £515 12s 0d for lots 1 (with its houses) and 2; James Hicks ('Builder') lots 3, 4, 5 and 6 for £240 19s 6d.

Along with his purchase in December 1885 Hicks also agreed with John Salmon and George Wallis that he would erect and maintain 'a good and sufficient fence' between his property and George Adams Wallis's. Six months later, however, he bought the 'other piece of freehold building land situate in Covent Garden' (i.e. lot 2) from George Adams Wallis for £68. When Hicks died in 1892, having built on all five plots, he left Nos 42, 44 and 46 Covent Garden to his eldest son the Rev Arthur Searle Hicks, Nos 48 and 50 to his youngest son Edwin Searle Hicks and the rest of his estate to his wife Hannah for as long as she remained a widow (which she did). She died in 1919. None of the Wallises or the Hicks ever lived in Covent Garden though some are buried in the Mill Road Cemetery.

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CHAPTER 2

BUILDERS, BUILDINGS AND OCCUPANCY

1. The Hicks family, Builders

The existence of the firm E. & J. Hicks, builders, is recorded from at least 1864. Elijah (b. 1828) and James (b. 1836) Hicks were half-brothers, both born in Cambridge, both bricklayers by trade, the firm located at 52 City Road in the Kite district. Their father, also James (c1801–71) was likewise a bricklayer, as was James's older step-brother George (1826–95). In 1871 the firm built two houses in Blossom Street and in 1872 a small church in Wellington Street. In 1873, James bought out Elijah; by 1881 he was named a 'Master builder employing ten men', and he remained in charge of the firm until his death in September 1892.⁴

Elijah, recorded in 1881 and 1891 as 'retired builder', died in 1899. Alfred, James's younger brother (b. c1839), had also by 1871 become a builder. He and his wife Emily lived with their family at 47 City Road. By 1881 Alfred was a 'Master builder employing six men'; he died later that year, after which Emily maintained his firm until her death in September 1892.

At James's death in September 1892 the Hicks firm was briefly continued by his son Edwin, but in the December it was taken over by one of James's bricklayers, Charles Allebone (1852–1926). Alfred's firm after the death of his widow was merged to form Hicks & Powell,⁵ located in 1895 at 39 Grafton Street and in 1898 at 35 Newmarket Road, but the merger was dissolved in 1899. The later work of the Hicks firms is taken up in §4, Architecture, below.

The Hicks family has a grave in Mill Road Cemetery (AL399), where James and Hannah (†1919) are buried together with their infant son Edwin Searle (†1866), their eldest son Arthur Searle (†1929), and James's mother Susan (†1862). At probate, James left an estate worth £6,468 6s 6d – which may account for the imposing nature of the monument. Charles Allebone and his wife occupy a more modest grave in the same cemetery (AG193).⁶



Figure 5 — Hicks family monument

2. Construction, Chronology

For the identity of a builder to be known is highly unusual at this period and given the type of housing – terraced 'working-class'. Builders of such houses are not usually named in the ownership deeds. Hicks's identity is known in this case because his purchase of the piece of land on the west side of Covent Garden between what are now Nos 52 and 40, sufficient for five houses, appears in (at least) one set of those house title deeds.

⁴ Sources of information from 1864, 1872, 1873 and 1892 are the *Cambridge Independent* and the *Cambridge Chronicle & Journal* (thanks to Claire Martinsen).

⁵ *Cambridge Chronicle & Journal*, December 1892 (thanks to Claire Martinsen).

⁶ See <https://millroadcemetery.org.uk/hicks-arthur-searle/> and <https://millroadcemetery.org.uk/allebone-charles/>.

The progress of building the terrace can be traced through the city street directories, which began publication in 1874 and were issued initially at three- or four-year intervals. The 1884 street directory is the first to record any occupants:

32 Bennett, Mrs Mary, domestic
 Garden ground
 31 Naylor, Mrs Sarah

'Garden ground' is the piece of land in question (see Fig. 4, p. 9 above), four-fifths of which had by then been acquired by James Hicks. The next street directory, 1887, lists four occupied houses, then numbered 33a, 34a, 35a, and 36a (since the unlettered numbers 33–36 already existed). The 1888 Ordnance Survey map shows exactly this situation with the gap between 31 and 33a clearly visible like a tooth gap (Fig. 6, top-left corner):



Figure 6 – Ordnance Survey map 1888, south end of Covent Garden

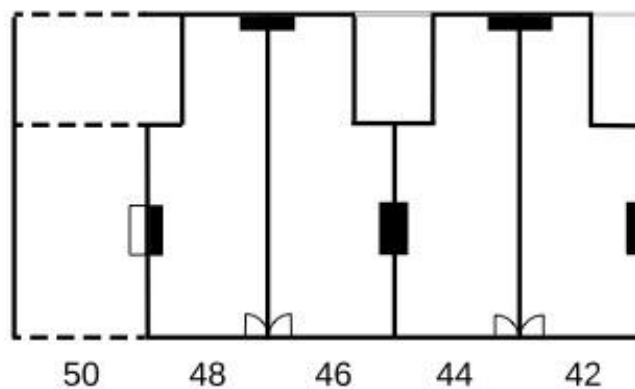


Figure 7 – Outline plan of site c. 1887

The occupants in 1887 were:

33a Bendall, Alfred Edward, gardener
 34a Brand, Albert, police constable
 35a Morgan, Charles, railway clerk
 36a Nicholson, George, gardener

By 1891, the gap had been filled and numbered 32a. Between 1888 and 1891, the houses in Covent Garden had been renumbered. Whereas before 1891 the numbers had run continuously down the east side (north to south) and up on the west side, now they ran down both sides, with

odd numbers on the east and even numbers on the west (reversing the order of the west side). Thus the Hicks' houses were renumbered;

pre-1888	32a	33a	34a	35a	36a
post-1890	50	48	46	44	42

In 1891, the occupants of the five houses were:

- 50 Pammenter, Geo, police officer
- 48 Marsh, Lazarus, police constable
- 46 Brand, Alfred, police constable
- 44 Baker, Edward, police constable
- 42 Nicholson, George, gardener

3. Architecture, Design

The five houses were all built in white Cambridge brick, with slate pitched roofs. Each individual house was L-shaped in outline, with a flat frontage and a shallow front garden, and a generous rear garden ending in a transverse path with a wall bordering Fenner's Cricket Ground.

Nos 42 to 48 were constructed in pairs in mirror-image, 42|44, 46|48, around their long dividing walls. Each pair comprised a rectangle containing eight living rooms (four per house) on two stories, and a rear projection, containing four rooms (two per house) also on two stories. The slate roof of the rectangle sloped forward and backward, that of the rear projections left and right.

The two-storey rear projections of 42|44 and 46|48 had shared chimneys on their long dividing and rear walls. Nos 44 and 46 shared a short dividing wall, surmounted by a shared chimney that served the eight living and bedrooms, while Nos 42 and 48 initially each had its own central chimney stack at its end of the terrace serving four rooms. Each house had fireplaces in both living rooms, both bedrooms and the kitchen. Each rear projection had a further short one-storey extension, also brick-built, housing a toilet with a door to the side (the 'side return') opening outwards, and a shed with door to the rear opening outwards. The roof of the toilet and shed sloped, as is demonstrated by No. 42, the only house to retain the walls of this extension, but where a triangle of brickwork has later been introduced in order to provide a flat roof (see Fig. 8).



Figure 8 — triangular brick insert (No. 42)

When building No. 50, Hicks was constrained by having an existing building on either side. Against No. 52, the frontage of which was direct on to the pavement, he simply abutted the new side wall, set several feet back and with a higher roof line, making for an awkward conjunction. Against the new No. 48 he doubled the existing wall which, unlike the others, had extended into the roof void, and doubled the thickness of the central chimney stack to accommodate the four extra flues of No. 50.

All five houses included a hallway behind the front door, with side doors leading into the two living rooms. The door of the rear living room gave through-access to the kitchen. A single flight of stairs beginning *c*14 feet from the front door led to the upper floor, turning through 90° on to a narrow landing which gave access to the three bedrooms, the front bedroom spanning the full frontage of the house with two windows, the middle and back bedrooms being

smaller and having single windows overlooking the cricket ground. The plot of No. 50 was c14 inches wider than that of the other houses, allowing the hall, stairs, living rooms and bedrooms to be somewhat wider without altering the arrangement of rooms.

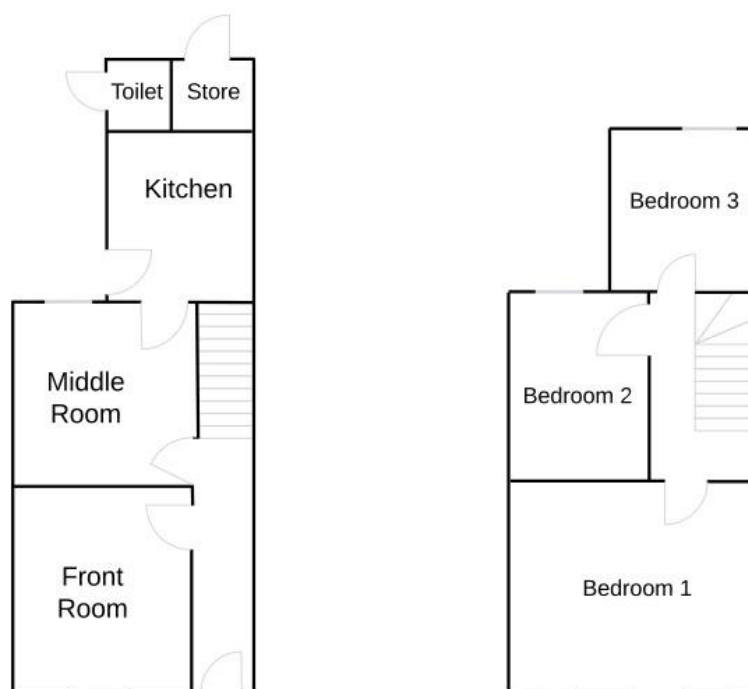


Figure 9 – Ground and first-floor plans

The path beyond the rear garden traversed Nos 42–48, giving access to all five rear gardens, with a passageway running down the side of No. 42 ending at the street. Each house had a legal right of way to use this path and passageway, with the consequence that each house had access from both front and rear. Furthermore, the gardens were separated from each other and, in the case of Nos 42–48, from the path, by brick walls.

Each house has four distinctively decorative brick corbels and brick dogtooth eaves (Fig. 10). Windows were sash with plain stone lintels, chamfered along the lower front edge, and each door had a similar stone lintel and rectangular fanlight.

These corbels revisit an issue raised in §2 above: unusual as they are, could these be a feature unique to the Hicks firm? Other examples can be found in Petersfield: Tenison Road (75–79), and Devonshire Road (5–9, 38–41, 43–48, 51–58 – odds and evens); and in Romsey: Sedgwick Street (48–56, 75–77, 99–101), St. Philip's Road (3–7, 25, 31–43), and Cavendish Road (52, 72–82) – a total of 58 known houses in the two wards – and in Abbey ward, Abbey Road 11–14 (odds and evens). None of the surviving houses in Blossom Street (see §2 above) have this feature.



Figure 10 – brick corbels and dog-tooth eaves
(Nos 48–46)



Figure 11 — red corbels and eaves
(75–79 Tenison Road)

Almost all of these latter corbels are in red brick, with red-brick eaves. The few white-brick corbels include 8, 9, 53, 54 and 55 Devonshire (and probably others now painted over) and 52 Cavendish Road. The Romsey houses are clustered in one vicinity. Of all these houses, only two have datestones, both on St. Philip's Road: Nos 7 and 25, both dated 1897. It is possible that these were built by James's firm under the leadership of Charles Allebone, or by Hicks & Powell (see §2 above).

4. Ownership

James Hicks completed the terrace in or by 1891. He died in 1892. His wife Hannah had given birth to three sons, the second of whom had died in infancy leaving Arthur Searle Hicks (b. 1862) and Edwin Searle Hicks (b. 1869). After James's death, the family moved from City Road to 5 Belvedere Terrace, Panton Street, where Hannah was still living at the time of her death in 1919. The Land Tax Assessments for 1910 and 1912 confirm that James left three of the houses to his elder surviving son and two to the younger son ('Tents' = Tenements, i.e. houses). Moses Free had succeeded Joseph Pammenter in No. 50 by 1898; Harry Churchman had succeeded Albert Brand at No. 46 by 1901:

Occupier	Owner	Description	Situation	Rent	Rate	Land	Tax	Sums to be collected	Payment Date
Free M + -another	Hicks, E.S.	2 Tents	[CG]	12.-	2.6	10876.18 6155/6	2.6	2.6	
Churchman + others	Hicks A.S.	3 Tents	"	13.-	3.-			3.	

Land Tax Assessment for years ending 24 March 1910 and 1912
(Cambridgeshire Archives, 107/O109–110)

From the Land Tax Assessments for the year ending 24 March 1923, we can see that ownership had moved to the occupants: Edwin Searle had died in 1915, Arthur Searle was to live to 1929 but, having moved away and now living in Bolton, must have decided to sell:

Free M + another	occip Hicks E.S.	2 Tents		[CG]	12.-	2.6	10876/8	2.6		
Churchman + others	Self	3 do		do	13.-	3.-	10880	3.-		

Land Tax Assessment for year ending 24 March 1923
(Cambridgeshire Archives, 107/O109–110)

And five years later things are made a little clear:

Free M + another	Self + another	2 Tents	50/48	[CG]	12.-	2.6		2.6		
Squires S.	Self	1 do	42	do	4.10/	1.-				

Churchman + another	Self + an- other	2 do	44/6	do	8.10/	2.-			2.-	
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Land Tax Assessment for year ending 24 March 1928
(Cambridgeshire Archives, 107/O109–110)

And by 1932 each house is given distinctly:

Free Moses	Self	1 tene- ment	50	[CG]	6.-	1.3			-.7	25/2/32
Marsh L[az- arus]	Self	do	48	do	6.-	1.3			-.7	25/2/32
Squires Samuel	Self	1 tene- ment	42	do	4. 10/	1.0			-.6	28/12/32
[<i>blank line</i>]			[44]							
Churchman Mrs. E[mily]	Churchman H.	1 do	46	do	4.5	1.-				

Land Tax Assessment for year ending 24 March 1932
(Cambridgeshire Archives, 107/O109–110)

No. 44 was presumably unoccupied on the date of assessment. At No. 46, Harry Churchman had died in January 1931 leaving his estate (£351 7s) to his wife, Emily Eliza, but evidently probate had not been completed in time for this to be reflected in col. 2.

5. Occupancy: Association with the Borough Police Force

As can be seen from the two occupancy lists given above, in 1887 one of the occupants, Henry Brand, was a member of the Cambridge Borough Police Force, and by 1891, four of the heads of houses were members of that force: George Pammenter, Lazarus March, Alfred (*recte* Albert) Brand, and Edward Baker. Only George Nicholson at No. 42 had other employment. By 1895, Joseph Pammenter occupied No. 42 and was himself a police constable, as were two of the others, George Pammenter and Lazarus March being 'police officers'.

A list of members of the Borough Police Force for 1895 includes the following personnel (Spalding street directory 1915):

Sergeant No. 4	George Pammenter
Detective Police Constable	Lazarus Marsh
Police Constable No. 7	Harry Churchman
Police Constable No. 22	Albert Brand
Police Constable No. 31	Edward Baker
Police Constable No. 37	Joseph Pammenter
Police Constable No. 43	Moses Free

By 1898, George Pammenter had risen to the rank of detective police sergeant, and had moved to 67 Mawson Road, by which time Moses Free had moved into No. 50.

In short, all five Hicks' houses had become 'tied houses' of the Borough Police Force and were as a result popularly known as 'policeman terrace'. The term 'tied house' is commonly used for a public house that is owned by a brewery and sells exclusively its beer; it is also widely used for a house owned by a farm or a manor house and occupied exclusively by agricultural workers or servants. This sense is skewed in the case of the Hicks' houses, since they were initially owned by the firm that built them, which had presumably contracted with the Borough Police to give exclusive occupancy to members of that Force.

The contract, formed in around 1891–95, held good until 1931/32 when Edward Baker, who had retired in 1922/23 but continued to live in No. 44 with his wife, vacated it and was replaced by Sidney Miller, occupation unstated, who was still there in 1975. At No. 46, Harry Churchman's wife Emily Eliza died in April 1937, leaving the house to her nephew, Bertie W. James (son of her brother William H James), who died in August 1977. Sammy Squires had vacated No. 42 by 1939/40 and moved into No. 48 after Lazarus Marsh died in 1938 (the latter's wife having died in 1932), to be replaced in No. 42 by L. W. Smith. Squires (whom one former resident remembers as 'very severe' to children) lived there until his death in 1967. Moses Free lived in No. 50 until his death in 1940 having left the house to his daughter Rosa Free, who lived there until shortly before 1980, after which she moved into a retirement home, dying in 1987 aged 100. Thus traces of the Police Force occupancy gradually diminished between 1931 and the late 1970s.

6. The Association ends

The first non-police occupancy, as we have seen, occurred in 1931/32 (street directories straddle years from 1919/20 to 1939/40 and again 1965/66). The following table gives an overview of the occupancy between 1931/32 and 1975, in which year street directories ceased publication (abbreviated names have been extended where known):

1931/32 42 Squires, Samuel, police constable 44 Miller, Sidney [no stated occupation] 46 Churchman, Mrs. H. [widow] 48 Marsh, Lazarus, ex-detective sergeant 50 Free, Moses, ex-police inspector	1948 [no occupations given hereafter] 42 Smith, Mrs C. 44 Miller, Sidney 46 James, Bertie W. 48 Squires, Samuel 50 Free, Miss Rosa
1939/40 42 Smith, L. W. [no stated occupation] 44 Miller, S. 46 James, Bertie W. 48 Squires, S., ex-police sergeant 50 Free, Moses, ex-police inspector	1957 42 Yates, Joseph – 1960 Hart, Clive – 1962 Veiga, Luis – 1966 Himington, C. M. – 1968 [vacant] 44 Miller, Sidney 46 James, Bertie W. 48 Squires, Samuel 50 Free, Miss Rosa
1937-38 42 Squires, Samuel, ex-police sergeant 44 Miller, Sidney 46 James, Bertie W. [timber labourer] 48 Marsh, Lazarus, ex-detective police-sergeant 50 Free, Moses, ex-police inspector	1975 42 McGregor, James 44 Miller, Sidney 46 James, Bertie W. 48 50 Free, Miss Rosa

The last survivors of the seven police families who had occupied the Hicks houses (Baker, Brand, Churchman, Free, Marsh, Pammenter and Squires) were thus two persons: Rosa Free

(daughter of Moses Free), from whom Andrew Uttley purchased No. 50 in or shortly before 1980; and Stanley Bertie James (grand-nephew of Harry Churchman's wife), from whom Peter Tyler bought No. 46 in 1981. Thus by the end of 1981 – just short of a hundred years after the agreement with the Cambridge Borough Police had been entered into – all association with the Cambridge police had been severed.

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CHAPTER 3

No. 42 COVENT GARDEN

(formerly No. 36a)

Ownership and Occupancy

As has been seen in chapters 1 and 2, No. 42, at the northern end of the terrace, was built by James Hicks between 1885, when Hicks acquired the land, and 1887, when the first occupants of the first four houses were recorded in Spalding's Street & General Directory of Cambridge of that year:

- 36a Nicholson, George, gardener
- 35a Morgan, Charles, railway clerk
- 34a Brand, Albert, police constable
- 33a Bendall, Alfred Edward, gardener

Under the will of builder James Hicks (1836–92)⁷ made in 1888, No. 42 was one of three bequeathed to his eldest son, Arthur Searle Hicks (1862–1929):

By his will of this date the said James Hicks [...] gave unto his Son Arthur Searle Hicks the following properties [...] the three messuages numbers 33 34 and 35 [*recte* 34 35 and 36 = 46, 44 and 42] Covent Garden, Mill Road, Cambridge.

Arthur had graduated from Christ's College, Cambridge in 1884 and was ordained priest in 1886, after which he held parishes in Birmingham, Manchester and Bolton, retiring to Cambridge for his last three years. Arthur never occupied No. 42.

The Nicholson family (1887–95)

The first occupants of No. 42, George Nicholson (1851–1937), domestic gardener of Chesterton, aged 33, his wife Sarah (*née* Mitham) (1855–1951) of Swavesey, aged 35, daughter Mary Alice, aged 5, and son William John, aged 3, lived at the house from 1887 to 1895. By 1901 they were living at 7 Caius Street (= upper part of Glisson Road), and from 1924/25 the couple were living at 6 Covent Garden, where Sarah was still living at her death. The couple are buried in Mill Road Cemetery (CL36).

The Pammenter family (1895–c.1910)

The Nicholsons were succeeded in 1895 by Joseph Pammenter, of Swaffham Bulbeck, aged 33, and his wife Elizabeth (*née* Streather), of Royston, aged 36. This was Joseph's second marriage, in 1889. The couple had no children. Joseph came from a family of agricultural labourers and had started life in the same employ. In 1891, Joseph and Elizabeth were living at 43 Union Terrace (= upper part of Mawson Road), and Joseph was already a police constable. He was the first of three policemen who were to occupy No. 42 for a total of over thirty years. In 1891, a George Pammenter (1850–1918), policeman since at least 1889, was the first occupant of No. 50 (see chapter 7); from neighbouring Swaffham Prior, he and Joseph must have been relatives: they were born within three years of one another, probably brothers or cousins.

⁷ For information on the Hicks building firms, see chapter 2, §§2 and 4.

The Savidge family (c.1910–c.1913)

By 1910,⁸ the Pammenters had been succeeded by Fred Savidge (1874–1946), police constable, born in Cottenham, Cambs, aged 37, and his wife Evangaline Fanny (1872–1950) of St. Albans, aged 39. In 1901, Fred had been living as a boarder next door at No. 44 and was already a police constable. By 1910, Fred and Evangaline had been married for eight years and had had no children. They eventually moved to 100 Canterbury Street, West Chesterton, where they both died. By 1939, Fred was a retired police sergeant.

Samuel Squires (1912–c.1939)

In 1912, the Savidges were succeeded by Samuel Squires (1886–1967), Peterborough-born, who occupied No. 42 until 1938 or 1939, being promoted to police sergeant in 1932/33. By 1926,⁹ Samuel Squires is listed as the owner of No. 42. When he purchased it from Arthur Searle Hicks is unknown. We know that Hicks sold No. 46 in June 1920 to Harry Churchman for £220, but not whether he divested himself of all three houses at the same time. In 1939/40 Samuel Squires, now retired and working as a rate collector,¹⁰ moved to No. 48, where he lived until at least 1965/66 (see chapter 6). With that move, the 35-year-long association of No. 42 with the Borough Police Force came to an end.

Subsequent Ownership and Occupancy

By 1939/40, the occupants of No. 42 were Leonard W. Smith, aged 28 or 29, bus driver, and his wife Catherine, aged 27 or 28. In the 1939 Register Leonard is noted as a 'civil fire guard' (perhaps indicating that he was unfit for war service?).

By 1948,¹¹ wife Catherine Smith is listed as the chief occupier; by 1957 Joseph J. Yates was the occupier, and after that there was a rapid succession of occupiers (for none of whom we can determine whether they owned the house): by 1960 Clive Hart, in 1962–64 Luis Veiga, Portuguese, and in 1965/66 C. M. Himington. In 1969 and 1970 the house was not even listed in the street directories; in 1974 Edward Huggins was the occupier, and in 1975 James McGregor.

Ownership or occupancy for the next twenty years is unclear, until 1997, when Lynda Townsend purchased the property. In 2020, her son and daughter, Thomas and Rosanna Greaves, inherited it under her will.

Alterations to Property

No. 42 is the closest of the five houses to its original lineaments. The yard at the side of the kitchen (its side return) is still open and undeveloped. (This is true at the moment for No. 46, but current plans there are to build over; No. 48 remains undeveloped but is partly covered.) Moreover, the brickwork of the outside toilet and shed has – uniquely – been preserved, and built up to provide a flat roof (See Figure 8 above). Consequently, the garden is still at its original size – shorter than those of Nos 48 and 50, longer than those of the other two. Instead

⁸ Land Tax Assessment for year ending 24 March 1910 (Cambridgeshire Archives, 107/O 109–110).

⁹ Land Tax Assessment for the year ending 24 March 1926 (Cambridgeshire Archives, 107/O 111–115). The Assessment for 1920 fails to list the house.

¹⁰ Personal testimony of Michael Marshall, 22 May 2010.

¹¹ Kelly's Street Directory of Cambridge.

of egress at the far end of the garden, there is a side gate opposite the kitchen, opening on to the side passage.

The toilet and shed now form a lobby at the rear of the kitchen, which retains its original dimensions, the lobby having double doors opening on to the garden. The square red floor tiles in the kitchen are the originals and compare with the kitchen flooring in No. 48. The kitchen door on to the side return remains, and is visible externally but has been enclosed on the interior. The chimney breasts in both main rooms on both floors remain, and the fireplace in the front sitting room is also retained, though replaced by another of Victorian design. The dividing wall between the front and middle sitting rooms has been removed and the door from the hallway to the front room plastered over. The door to the middle room remains. What look like the original floorboards exist in the hallway and both main rooms (again, cf. No. 48).

Upstairs, the front and middle bedrooms are unchanged. The third bedroom (over the kitchen) has been converted into a bathroom, beyond which is a small balcony with metal railings (over the original outside toilet and shed).

All of these alterations were made before 1997. Since then the attic, while not fully converted in the manner of Nos 44, 46 and 50, has been floored to provide a working space and a velux window installed in the rear roof pitch. A small window was at some point cut through the external side wall, looking out towards No. 40.

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CHAPTER 4

No. 44 COVENT GARDEN

(formerly No. 35a)

Ownership and Occupancy

As has been seen in chapters 1, 2 and 3, No. 44 was built by James Hicks between 1885, when Hicks acquired the land for Nos 42 to 48, and 1887, when the original occupants of those first four houses were recorded in Spalding's Street & General Directory of Cambridge of that year, naming the occupant of No. 44 as 'Morgan, Charles, railway clerk'.

All four houses were then owned by the builder, James Hicks, at whose death in 1892 the first three (36a, 35a, 34a = 42, 44, 46) were left to his eldest son, Arthur Searle Hicks, an Anglican priest who lived in a succession of parishes in Lancashire.

The Morgan family (1887–c.1891)

Nothing definitive is known of railway clerk Charles Morgan. A Charles Morgan married a Grace Marion Mabbutt in the summer of 1884 at St. Edward's Church, but nothing further can be established about them. By 1891 they had left and the new tenant was 'Baker, Edward, police constable'.

The Baker family (c. 1891–1931)

Edward Baker (1860–1935) had a difficult childhood. Born in Babraham, a village six miles south-east of Cambridge, he was the illegitimate child of Harriet Baker, his father being Joseph Milton, gamekeeper of nearby Whittlesford. The day the 1861 census was taken Edward was two months old and was living at Harper's Lodge, Babraham with his grandmother Catherine Baker, mother Harriett, aged 21, and uncle Robert, aged 31, agricultural labourer. In 1871, Edward was still living with his grandmother but now in the Babraham alms houses, Catherine described as a pauper, Edward aged 10 already as an agricultural labourer. Ten years later things were very different: Edward had moved to Cambridge, had joined the Borough Police Force as a police constable, and was lodging at 3 Paradise Street in the Kite District. In 1883 he married Agnes Mary Spalding (1862–1938), previously a domestic servant.

By 1891 the couple were settled in Covent Garden at No. 44 with daughter Lillian Elizabeth (1886–1943), and older son, Ernest, who died aged 5. Edward had been promoted to police sergeant by 1901, and the following year rose to the rank of police inspector. By that time, the family had a lodger, Fred Savidge (1874–1946), police constable, who by 1910 had moved on to No. 42 (see chapter 3).

By analogy with No. 46, it is possible that the Bakers purchased No. 44 from Arthur Searle Hicks in or around 1920, though we have no evidence to support this. By June 1921 Edward was retired. The Bakers lived on at No. 44 for a further decade, moving in 1931 to nearby 152 Tenison Road, where Edward died aged 75 and was buried in the St Paul's section of Mill Road cemetery (PL51) with his infant son Ernest. Thereafter, Agnes Mary moved to live with

daughter Lillian and son-in-law Harry Brooks Hutcherson (1885–1951) in Colchester, where she died in July 1938.¹²

Subsequent Ownership and Occupancy

In 1931, Sidney Horace Miller (1902–83), college gardener, was the occupant of No. 44 with his wife, Harriet Elizabeth May (1904–83), both Cambridge born. The couple had no children. Sidney was the fourth of six children of John Miller, carriage builder, and his wife Olivia, living at 89 Sturton Street, Cambridge. Sidney attended the Cambridge Boys' Grammar School. At the beginning of the Second World War he was a civil fire guard. The Millers died within two months of each other in the Spring of 1983. Soon after that, the house was purchased by Mrs Emily Jane Bourriau (1911–2000), who willed it to her daughter Janine Delysia Bourriau, Egyptologist and specialist in ceramic pottery, who was married to Peter G. French, also an Egyptologist. The couple continued to live at 98 Mawson Road, selling the house to the present owners, Malcolm and Glynis Taylor, in 2000.

Alterations to the Property

Previous to the Taylors' acquisition of the property, a conservatory had been constructed alongside the rear projection (covering the 'side return'), extending westwards to include the original one-storey rear outside toilet and shed. In addition, the rear bedroom, above the kitchen, had been converted to a bathroom. With the arrival of the Taylors, the conservatory was replaced around 2001–03 by building out sideways to the boundary line with No. 46 and rearwards to beyond the toilet and shed, in line with the 1981 extension of No. 46. At the same time, the stairs were removed from the north side of the house, while leaving the front hall in place, and moved to the south side rotated through 90°, with a turn-round halfway up; a bathroom was installed in the middle bedroom and the third bedroom restored to its original function. Together, these changes provided an open-plan combined kitchen, living room, and dining room with glasswork over.

The rearward extension also allowed for a small balcony on the first floor outside the rear bedroom that gave a pleasant view over Fenner's (from which Malcolm Taylor recalls watching an elegantly aggressive half-century by Vivian Richards during a Sunday charity match – remembered also by Sue Howson). The Taylors also opened up the loft to become an occasional bedroom. In 2022, additional Velux dormers were added to the rear roof in order to improve the headroom in the loft bedroom. The rear garden was laid out as a serpentine paved space for outdoor sitting surrounded by shrubs.

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¹² Thanks to Judy Lester, who researched some of this information.

CHAPTER 5

No. 46 COVENT GARDEN

(formerly No. 34a)

Ownership and Occupancy

The first indication in the deeds for No. 46 that all five houses of the terrace had been completed appears in a document dated 1920, but which traces the history of the site from 1830 to that date; reciting two indentures dated 1852 and 1886, the document states:

subsequently to the respective dates of the thereinbefore recited Indentures the said James Hicks erected five dwellinghouses upon the said pieces of land.

It goes on to specify the occupants of three of those houses:

All those three dwellinghouses situate being Numbers 42, 44 and 46 Covent Garden [...] were occupied by Nicholson, Baker and Brand.

We know from the street directories that No. 46 was occupied from at least 1887 by Albert Brand, making it likely that he was the first tenant.¹³

The Brand family (c.1887–c.1901)

During Arthur Hicks's ownership, the first occupants of No. 46, from 1887, were Albert Brand (1852–1917), and his wife Mary Ann (*née* Poulter) (1847–1927). The couple were married in 1873 and by 1891 had six children, ranging in ages from 17 to 4: Harry (wine merchant's porter), Edmund (page boy), Albert, Elizabeth, Harriett and Elliott (all at school). Albert senior was born in Little Shelford, and Mary Ann



Figure 13 –Mary Ann Brand

in Hinxton, villages 4 and 8 miles south of Cambridge respectively. Albert joined the Cambridge Borough Police Force as a police constable (the rank he held at his retirement) in 1873 (sons Edmund and Elliott both later joined the force). After retirement in 1898, Albert ran the Windmill pub at the top of Covent Garden (42 Mill Road, demolished to make way for the Playhouse in 1913). By 1901 the family had moved to 4 Ross Street, and by 1911 to 55 Mawson Road, where Albert died aged 65 in 1917. Albert, Emily and Elizabeth are buried in Mill Road Cemetery (AG295).

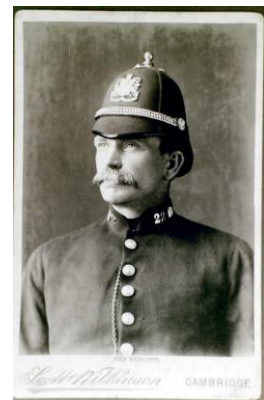


Figure 12 –Arthur Brand

The Churchman family (1901–81)

By 1901, the occupants of No. 46 were Harry F. Churchman (1868–1931) and his wife Emily Eliza (*née* James) (1869–1937), both born in the village of Harston, 5 miles southwest of

¹³ For the 1887 and 1891 street directory entries, see chapter 2, §2, p. 12.

Cambridge. The couple married in 1890 and had no surviving children. By 1891 Harry had joined the Cambridge Borough Police Force as a police constable, the rank he held at his retirement c.1920. On 14 June 1920, Arthur Searle Hicks, who was at the time living in Bolton, and still the owner of Nos 42–46, sold the property to Harry Churchman for £220. By June 1921, Emily's father James, aged 81, was living with them until his death in 1928. At Harry's death on 5 January 1931, Emily Eliza inherited the house and all his possessions, and continued to occupy it until her death on 15 April 1937, despite having failed legally to 'vest' the property in herself.

In her will, Emily left the house and all her possessions to her brother William Henry James, farm labourer of Great Shelford, and after him to his son Bertie William James (1899–1977), 'builder's merchant's yardman' (also 'timber labourer' and 'plumber's mate'), then living at 46 Sedgwick Street in Romsey Town, and after him to his son Stanley Bertie James (1928–82). However, Emily had failed to name an executor in her will and the case had to go to the High Court for letters of administration to rectify the matter. No. 46 was duly 'vested' in Bertie William James, who then took up residence in 1937/38 with his wife Annie Kate (*née* Ward) (1900–90), and at least the one child, Stanley Bertie James (1928–82) in whom the property was vested in 1978, after Bertie William's death the year before.

Stanley Bertie James sold No. 46 in 1981, and with that sale ended the 94-year-long association of the house with the Cambridge Police Force. Stanley Bertie moved to 70 Greville Road, where he died the following year.

Subsequent Ownership and Occupancy

The house was sold to Peter Tyler, then a research officer, subsequently Professor of Urban and Regional Economics in the Department of Land Economy, University of Cambridge, and Fellow of St. Catharine's College, who occupied it for seven years. In 1988, he sold it to a Mr. P. Hoffman, who apparently bought it purely as an investment.

Sue Howson recalls that in 1990, the house was occupied by a young couple, the husband of whom had inherited it from an aunt or uncle, and was, with his wife and young son, trying out living in Cambridge while working in London. They ultimately decided to return to their flat in London.

After them, the house was purchased by Brian and Evelyn Hornsby, a couple from Yorkshire. Mr. Hornsby, who had served in the army, was a keen cricket fan. He used to watch the cricket on Fenner's from his roof terrace, and would call to his neighbour, Sue Howson, when the game was getting exciting, as for instance in a match against Durham when Ian Botham was playing.

The Hornsbys moved away in the autumn of 1992, and sold the house in February 1993 to Tim Cotton, who ran a letting agency, RTM Property Management Ltd., and his wife Allix, who were living at 49 Glisson Road. They let No. 46 to tenants over the next twenty-seven years. These included several young Irishmen, three of whom provided a barbecue in their front garden at the June 2010 and 2011 Covent Garden street parties. One of these played for Cambridge Rugby Club, another rowed at stroke in the Cantabs' second boat in the Town Bumps of 2005 to 2008. They were all young professionals not associated with the University. The last of the Irishmen, Tomás Harrington won a Blue for Australian-rules football and also played Gaelic football and hurling for the University. He had a research position in the Department of

Engineering, and is now Associate Professor in Digitalisation & Operations Management at the Norwich Business School of the University of East Anglia. After that were two non-Irish PhD students along with Tomás. The final tenants were a German couple, the wife a teacher of mathematics in one of the village colleges; they lived there from 2017 to 2020.

Tim Cotton died in 2005, and Allix Cotton sold the house on 3 December 2020 to James McNiven.

Alterations to Property

The property seems to have remained unchanged until 1981, when Peter Tyler had the rear outside toilet and shed demolished and replaced by a one-story building extended by several feet beyond the original shed wall. Into the resulting space he accommodated a separate enclosed toilet, and a bathroom, and moved the back door rearwards opposite the toilet, widening the kitchen window; over this he created a roof terrace with wooden balustrades, and with views of Fenner's. In 1982 or 1983 he had the dividing wall between the two downstairs living rooms taken out, and probably also the door between the hall and the rear living room.

In 2021, James McNiven had the toilet opposite the rear door removed to form a cupboard. In 2023, he received permission from the Council to make further alterations. These entailed moving the north wall of the rear projection out to the property line with No. 44, thereby widening the existing kitchen–cupboard–bathroom spaces and creating one continuous downstairs space comprising a kitchen and dining room, with a wall of glass giving access to the garden; and installing a downstairs toilet beside the stairs. The first-floor accommodation is to be re-organized to provide three bedrooms and a bathroom, while the dimensions of the roof terrace remain the same.

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CHAPTER 6

No. 48 COVENT GARDEN

(formerly No. 33a)

Ownership and Occupancy

As has been seen in Chapters 1 and 2, No. 48 was built by James Hicks between 1885, when he acquired the land, and 1887, when its first occupant is listed in the street directory of that year: 'Bendall, Alfred Edward, gardener'. Its next occupant, in the 1891 directory, was 'Marsh, Lazarus, police constable', who was to live in the house until his death in 1938. From 1892, when James Hicks died, the house was owned by his younger son Edwin Searle Hicks, who lived at 52 City Road, Cambridge, and it remained in the Hicks family until 1915.

Edwin Searle Hicks died in June 1915 leaving the property to his wife Alice May Hicks; they were then living at 5 Belvedere Terrace, Panton Street. She did not long outlive her husband, dying in November 1915, having made a will leaving the house to Leonard Smith Boning and Leslie George Boning, sons of Henry Arthur Boning of 8 St Mary's Road, Canonbury, London. Administration of her will was granted to Henry Arthur Boning (now described as 'Cambridge University Press Salesman') in February 1916 since Leonard Smith Boning had not applied for probate and Leslie George Boning was still a minor. Four years later he sold the house to Lazarus Potter Marsh for £220.¹⁴

The Bendall family

Alfred Bendall came from unusually far afield: he was born in 1853 in Bath, Somerset, the son of a labourer. At the age of 29, in 1881, he was even further away, in Chittlehampton, North Devon, married with three children, the first two of whom were born in Holne, near Torquay (where his wife was born), and the third in Chittlehampton, where Alfred was a butler.

What brought the family to Cambridge is unclear, but by 1885 they must have been living in the Kite district, where their eldest child attended Paradise Street School. Two years later, Alfred was living at No. 48 with wife Sarah Ann (32), William Alfred (12), Jessie May (10), Frances L. (4) and Garnet Herald (3). They cannot have remained there for more than four years: by 1891 – with a new-born baby, Daisy – they were living at 3 Petersfield, Cambridge. Alfred's occupation there is again given as 'gardener'.

The Marsh family

Lazarus Potter Marsh (c1856–1938) was born in West Wrating (a village 10 miles south-east of Cambridge), the son of John Precious Marsh, a farm worker and local Methodist preacher, and Mary (*née* Potter). Lazarus had moved to Cambridge by 1881, when he was lodging with his sister and her husband at 5 Garden Cottages in the Kite district, by which time he was a police constable in the Cambridge Borough Police Force.

¹⁴. Abstract of the Title of the Personal Representatives of Alice May Hicks deceased to Freehold hereditaments situate in Covent Garden in the Borough of Cambridge 1920; Mr. H. A. Boning to Mr. L. P. Marsh Conveyance of Freehold Hereditaments known as No. 48 Covent Garden Cambridge 19 April 1920.

Lazarus's wife Elizabeth Mary (*née* Benson) (c1856–1932) was born in the village of Hinxton (9 miles south of Cambridge). In 1881, she was working as a housemaid to Walter Skeat, Professor of Anglo-Saxon Studies, at 2 Salisbury Villas, Station Road, Cambridge. Lazarus and she married in March 1884. By 1891, the couple were living at No. 48, and had two children: Ethel Mary, born 1887, and Bertram Potter, born c1890. By 1895, Lazarus had been promoted to the rank of detective police constable, by 1913 to that of detective police sergeant, and by June 1921 he had retired. He continued to live at No. 48 until his death in 1938. Elizabeth Marsh had died in 1932.

A local newspaper reported: 'Lazarus Marsh, a sidesman at St. Paul's Church where he had worshipped for many years, collapsed on his way to morning service on Sunday 4 September 1938 and died in Addenbrooke's in the afternoon'.¹⁵ – Lazarus and Elizabeth are buried in the St Clement's section of Mill Road cemetery, along with Bertram's wife Elsie May, with a fine grey marble headstone with scroll, urn, and kerbstones (CL78).



Figure 14 – The Marsh family grave (CL 78)

The Squires family

Lazarus's and Elizabeth's daughter, Ethel Mary, married police constable Samuel Squires (1886–1967) in April 1910, and the couple lived initially at 130 Gwydir Street. However, with the departure of the Savidge family from No. 42 Covent Garden, Samuel and Ethel were able to acquire the tenancy of that property in 1912. When Lazarus Marsh died he had left a will appointing his two children as his executors and bequeathing 'all my jewellery plate plated articles linen china glass books pictures prints furniture and household effects' to them in equal shares, the house to his daughter Ethel Mary Squires for her lifetime and thereafter to his son Bertram Potter Marsh, and the remainder of his estate to his son.¹⁶ Ethel and her husband Samuel Squires then moved from No. 42 to No. 48, taking possession in June 1939.

When Ethel Mary Squires died without a will in September 1958 her husband Samuel Squires bought the house from her brother for £850. The Squires had no children and when Samuel Squires died in September 1967 he left his estate to his nephews, John Dennis Bull and Harry Franklin Bull, both company directors, living in St Neots, Huntingdonshire, and Sandy, Bedfordshire, respectively. They sold it, for £2,300, in May 1968 to Mrs Alice Miller, a widow then living at 14 Devonshire Road, Cambridge. She in turn sold it for £2,150 two years later, when she was living in Llandudno, North Wales.¹⁷

Subsequent occupancy

The new owner was Christopher Vincent Jeans, a geologist in Cambridge University, the son of the physicist Sir James Jeans and his second wife the organist and harpsichordist Suzanne

¹⁵ *Cambridge Daily News*, 5 September 1938, p. 3.

¹⁶ 'Will of Lazarus Potter Marsh dated 25 September 1937; The Personal Representatives of Lazarus Potter Marsh deceased to Mrs Ethel Mary Squires Vesting Assent re 48 Covent Garden in the Borough of Cambridge 20 June 1939.'

¹⁷ The Personal Representatives of Mrs Ethel Mary Squires deceased to Bertram Potter Marsh Esq Vesting Assent re 48 Covent Garden in the City of Cambridge 18 November 1958; B. P. Marsh Esq. to S. Squires, Esq. Conveyance of freehold property known as No. 48 Covent Garden in the City of Cambridge 21 November 1958; The Personal Representatives of Samuel Squires deceased to Mrs. A. Miller Conveyance of a freehold property situate and known as No. 48 Covent Garden in the City of Cambridge 31 May 1968; Mrs. A. Miller to C. V. Jeans, Esq. Conveyance of freehold property known as No. 48 Covent Garden in the City of Cambridge 18 March 1970.

Hock (Susie Jeans). By this time the house was in need of renovation as well as an indoor bathroom; the extensive internal alterations devised by Dr Jeans left the house as it is today (see next section).

There have been three owners since Chris Jeans. Margot Ann Boyd, an Australian working for Cambridge University Press, bought the house from Chris Jeans in 1976 for £10,200 and sold it to Iain McKechnie-Jarvis, a solicitor with Miller & Co. of 75/79 Regent Street, Cambridge in 1984. In 1989 Don Moggridge and Sue Howson, both professors of economics at the University of Toronto in Canada, previously fellows of Clare College and Wolfson College respectively, acquired it (for £102,000) to use in university vacations and sabbatical leaves until their retirement, otherwise renting it out through the Society for Visiting Scholars (later the University Accommodation Syndicate) to a succession of visiting academics and postdoctoral fellows.

Alterations to Property

Dr Jeans's alterations were intended to exploit the fine views over the University Cricket Ground as well as to accommodate a bathroom. Downstairs, the kitchen was moved to the front of the house and separated from the hall by wooden cupboards and from the rest of the front room by a counter with cupboards below. The straight staircase in the middle room was taken out and replaced by a new spiral one nearer the front door. Removal of the dividing walls



Figure 15 – No. 48 rear projection

between all three downstairs rooms provided a single large open living room with direct access to the garden. The original chimney breasts are still in place throughout.

The outdoor toilet behind the back wall of the rear projection was demolished and two windows inserted in that wall either side of a Victorian fireplace (obtained from the Sedgwick Museum of Geology, which was itself under restoration) in place of the stove.

Upstairs the front bedroom was replaced with a very small bedroom, an even smaller bathroom and a minimal landing at the top of the new stairs; the dividing wall between the middle room and the back room was partly removed, so that the third bedroom became a study annexe to the enlarged middle bedroom. The fireplace in the middle bedroom is believed to be the original. The plans were passed by the City Council in August 1970.

The two main rooms downstairs still have their original floorboards, as do all three rooms upstairs, and what was the kitchen still has its original tiled floor (currently covered by fitted carpet).

Since 1970 the old roof slates have been replaced, a Velux window inserted, and the party wall with No. 46 extended into the roof void (in 1991).

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CHAPTER 7

No. 50 COVENT GARDEN

(formerly No. 32a)

Ownership and Occupancy

The circumstances of No. 50 differ from those of the other four houses in that it was built and occupied somewhat later and was marginally wider. The final two paragraphs of chapter 1 explain how this came about.

The builder, James Hicks, had purchased the plots of Nos 42, 44, 46 and 48 in October 1885, at which time the plot of No. 50 had been purchased – along with adjacent houses to the south (Nos 52–58) – by George Adams Wallis. Hicks agreed to build a fence between the plots of No. 48 and 50, but in June 1886 the additional plot came up for auction and Hicks was the highest bidder. By that date the building of the other four houses must already have been underway because the 1887 street directory lists them together with their occupants (see chapter 2, §2). It was in the 1891 directory (which was then issued only every three or four years) that the house and its occupant were listed: ‘50 Pammenter, Geo., police officer’.

The Pammenter family (1891–c.1897)

George Pammenter (1850–1918) was born in Swaffham Bulbeck, a village 8 miles north-east of Cambridge, the son of a farm worker. His wife Mary (1842–1930) was from nearby Stow cum Quy. George joined the Cambridge Borough Police Force in 1867; he and Mary were married in 1871 and lived at 10 Eden Street in the Kite district. By 1881 they had moved to Grafton Street and had two children, Mary Elizabeth (1871–1949), and Albert William (1879–1953). The couple had three other children who died in infancy. By 1891 the four of them were settled in at No. 50 Covent Garden and had a lodger, grocer’s assistant Alfred B. Cockerton, aged 21. They were still there in 1895, but by 1898 had moved away, George having retired in August 1895 at the rank of detective police sergeant after twenty-eight years’ service. In 1901 they were living at 15 Mawson Road, and by 1911 at 67 Mawson Road, the children having left home. George died in November 1918, aged 67. An obituary to him states that after retirement he worked as a commissionaire at the New Theatre in St Andrew’s Street for over twenty-two years. George and Mary are buried in the St Paul’s area of Mill Road cemetery (PL214).¹⁸

The Free family (c.1898–c.1980)

Moses Free (1864–1940) was born in Castle Camps, a Cambridgeshire village close to the Suffolk and Essex borders, the fourth of seven children of Philip Free, hawker, and Rebecca Free, smock maker. By 1881, aged 17, he was living in Yorkshire as a servant of a farmer in Huby, but by 1887 he had arrived in Cambridge. In that year he married Flora Parish (1867–1926) of Cambridge, whose father was an engine driver on the Great Eastern Railway. By

¹⁸ This paragraph has drawn heavily on work done by Judy Lester and Claire Martinsen for the Mill Road cemetery website: <https://millroadcemetery.org.uk/pammenter-george-2/> and also <https://millroadcemetery.org.uk/pammenter-george/>.

1891 the couple were living at 33 Great Eastern Street. In the meantime, Moses had joined the Cambridge Borough Police as a constable.

Between 1895 and 1898 the couple moved into 50 Covent Garden, and by 1901 they had four children: Ernest Robert (1888–1918), aged 12, a chorister at Corpus Christ College; Bertha Marjory (1891–1961), aged 10; Frederick Charles (1892–1970), aged 8; and Rosa Eliza Rebecca (1896–1987), aged 4. By 1901, Moses had risen to the rank of acting police sergeant, by 1911 to full police sergeant, and by 1918 to police inspector. By June 1921 he had retired, aged 56.



Figure 16 – Moses and Flora



Figure 17 – Frederick, Moses, and Ernest Free in 1918

Ernest and Frederick both fought in the First World War, Ernest in the Royal Garrison Artillery, Frederick in the Durham Light Infantry. Whereas Frederick survived the war, Ernest contracted influenza (the ‘Spanish flu’) in France in 1918, was brought home, and died in the July. By 1923 at the latest, Moses had purchased No. 50 from Edwin Searle Hicks.¹⁹ Flora died in 1926 aged 59, after which Moses continued to live at No. 50 until his death in 1940, aged 75.

Rosa, as the last of the children to remain in the parental home, aged 44, inherited the house from her father. She was an elementary teacher at Romsey Council School (corner of Coleridge Road and Mill Road), and is remembered by many local residents as ‘Miss Free’ with her hair done up in a bun. She was a keen photographer and tennis player, and drove a small car. She was a parishioner at St Paul’s Church for many years. There is a nice story that she used to let a cricket-mad curate come and sit in an upstairs back room and watch



Figure 18 – Free headstone, Mill Road Cemetery (AG279)

¹⁹ Land Tax Assessment for year ending 24 March 1923 (Cambridgeshire Archives, 107/O109–110) – cf. chapter 2, §4.

matches! She sold No. 50 in or shortly before 1980, and moved to the Coronation Street Home where she died in 1987 aged 90.

Moses, Flora and Ernest are buried in the St Andrew the Great section of Mill Road (AG279), near the west path, with a handsome, ornate white marble gravestone.

Subsequent Ownership

The house was purchased from Miss Rosa Free c.1980 by Andrew Uttley, then a research student. Andrew was a violinist, and his neighbour at No. 48 remembers enjoying listening to the string quartets that he played with his friends.

He sold the house in 2001 to Tony Boyle, Professor of Classics at the University of Southern California, specialist in Roman history and culture, and Helen Morales, then Lecturer in Classics at Cambridge University and fellow of Newnham College. They and their daughter Athena left in 2008 when Helen was appointed to the Center for Hellenic Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where she was appointed Argyropoulos Professor of Hellenic Studies.

The house was then purchased by Tim Johnston (1941–2021), long-distance and cross-country runner who ran the marathon at the 1986 Summer Mexico Olympics, and was national champion in the six-mile event at which he set a British record. His undergraduate studies were at Cambridge. He was also a solicitor, and a translator at the International Court of Justice in The Hague, shuttling regularly between Cambridge and The Hague. He rented part of No. 50 to young athletes, notably triathletes and cyclists, between 2008 and 2015.

In 2015 the house was purchased by Dr James Hawkey and Carol Ripley. Jamie Hawkey had just been appointed Dean and Director of Studies in Theology at Clare College. He had done his undergraduate and graduate studies at Cambridge and read for the priesthood at Westcott House, being ordained deacon in 2007 and priest in 2008. Carol, after undergraduate and graduate studies at the University of Aberdeen, became a partner of the estate agents Bidwells, later Team Head in the Investment Division of the Church Commissioners, travelling up several days a week to London. She has since been appointed by the Duchy of Lancaster as its Head of Rural Investment. The couple were married in September 2012 in Westminster Abbey, where Jamie had been a minor canon and sacrist since 2010. Jamie was heavily involved in inter-church dialogue, frequently visiting Rome and also Russia. The couple left when Jamie was appointed Canon Theologian at the Abbey and a chaplain to HM the Queen and subsequently the King. He is also visiting professor in theology at King's College London, and a bye fellow of Clare College.

They retain the ownership of No. 50 and have since rented it out. The first tenants were Rory Phillips, QC (now KC), and Anna Burness, who married at St. Bene't's Church during their stay at No. 50. Rory had done his undergraduate studies at Cambridge, was called to the Bar in 1984 and made a QC in 2002. He is a specialist in commercial, financial and public law. Anna, a languages graduate from Lund University in Sweden, had worked for many years in a London gallery, but during their time in Cambridge taught English as a foreign language. Rory and Anna had rented No. 25, across the road, for nearly three years, before moving to No. 50, where they stayed for another three years. He is a Bencher of the Inner Temple, and he and Anna moved to a flat there in January 2022. Since that date, the house has been rented by another family.

Alterations to Property

Around 1980, Andrew Uttley made significant alterations to the internal accommodation. On the ground floor, he had the wall between the front and middle rooms removed, and the doorway between the hall and the front room closed up. The kitchen had been fitted with cupboards and a hob. At the back, the outside toilet and store had been demolished, and a window cut in the rear wall of the kitchen looking out on to an L-shaped brick patio that extended round the side of the kitchen.

On the first floor, the front bedroom had been reduced in size by the creation of a bathroom partly in line with the landing, so that each space had a window to the street. The attic was unchanged; both pitches of the main roof were redone with slates and two Velux windows were introduced into the rear pitch.

During his ownership (2008–15), Tim Johnston made extensive modifications, designed by Cambridge architects Freeland Rees Roberts. On the ground floor, the north wall of the kitchen was removed and the side return roofed over, incorporating two large Velux windows, thus extending the kitchen area to the boundary with No. 48, with a rear door to the garden. A toilet was installed beneath the stairs, opening on to the middle room.

On the first floor, the bathroom was redesigned so as to return to the front bedroom some of its original space. The attic was refitted as a bedroom with ensuite bath, toilet and washbasin, shelving and wardrobe, with a staircase constructed from the first floor. The rear pitch roof was reconstructed as a lateral pitch roof with north and south slopes and Velux windows in the north slope, which gave greater headroom and light to the bedroom.

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CONCLUSION



Figure 19 – View of Fenner's from No. 42 Covent Garden

The Hicks houses may be ‘common English row houses’ (Muthesius), but they are unusual in that they were built on the east side of the University Cricket Ground, which gives them (as it does Nos 52–58 Covent Garden) the fine view of a large green space (and of cricket matches) and provides them with plentiful light indoors. They were also superior housing in having two living rooms, a separate kitchen with piped water, a lavatory attached to the house and three upstairs bedrooms. When the time came for the installation of an indoor bathroom including the WC – in Cambridge assisted by grants from the City Council in the 1970s – this posed the problem of where to put it. The obvious place, given that an 1875 Act of Parliament specified there should be at least one outside wall with a window, was the back upstairs room over the kitchen: ‘the most convenient location ... for ventilation purposes ... as well as for simplified plumbing’, as Muthesius points out (p. 100). In the case of the Hicks Houses this would deprive them not only of a third bedroom but also of the view and the plentiful interior light.

By the 1980s the five houses showed five different solutions to this ‘bathroom problem’. No. 42 adopted the obvious solution (though adding a terrace outside the bathroom). No. 44 retained the outside lavatory and had no indoor bathroom until the 1990s, when a bathroom was similarly installed in the rear bedroom, only to be moved to the middle bedroom in the renovations of 2002–03. No. 46 kept its third bedroom by building a bathroom incorporating the lavatory on the ground floor behind the kitchen. No. 50, being wider, could have the large front bedroom divided into a bathroom and a small bedroom, thus also retaining a third bedroom. No. 48 followed No. 50, but only by moving the staircase towards the front of the house in order to convert the middle bedroom into the large bedroom and converting the back bedroom into an annex to the main bedroom; this ‘back-to-front’ arrangement was also introduced downstairs, by moving the kitchen to the front of the house, allowing the back room to have west facing windows as well as its access to the garden.

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