

## ***Chapter Nine: The modern village – and established villagers***

This section considers some of the developments in the village through the twentieth century, as well as emphasising the links between many ‘old’ parish families and our present inhabitants.

### **Longstanding village families**

#### *The Collingwood Family*

The Collingwood family is a long-established village family. The name “Richard de Callingwoode” was mentioned in a deed of 1314 and may establish a very long lineage. In more modern times, it appears that they originally lived in the Croxall part of Edingale and early records are given in the Croxall register. Later, the family spread into both sides of the village, making it more complicated to trace, as details are in both registers.

The earliest parish record to be found is of Thomas and Rebeccah Collingwood having two sons, Isaac in 1772 and Joseph in 1774. Also, Thomas and Susan Collingwood had a son, Thomas, baptised in 1770. The Croxall census follows numerous families through the nineteenth century: Thomas and Sarah Collingwood (who had five children) and Isaac and Elizabeth Collingwood (who had eight children).

It would appear that our present-day Collingwoods are descended from Joseph Collingwood who was baptised on 13<sup>th</sup> February 1774. He married Mary, who was born in Smisby, and they had nine children: twin boys Joseph and William (1802 but William was buried in 1803); Ann (1805); James (1805-1884); a second William (1813-1874), Thomas (1815), George (1817), Elizabeth (1818-1901) and Joseph (1822).

Joseph, their father, was buried at Croxall on 8<sup>th</sup> February 1829, aged 54, and Mary was buried on the 19<sup>th</sup> May 1855, aged 80.

Joseph was a shoe maker, James was an “*agricultural labourer and market carrier.*” He married Maria and they had eight children, one of whom, Mary, married Henry Hatchett. William was an agricultural labourer, Thomas a shoe maker and George an agricultural labourer.

George married Ann and they had seven children: Elizabeth (1853), George (1855-1910), Thomas (1857), Mary Ann (1858-1906), Decimus (1862-1932), Harry (1866) and Bessy (1869).

Harry is listed in the 1901 census working as a butcher, boarding with Elizabeth Gadsby. Also in the household was his niece, Sarah Elizabeth, and her two children, Arthur and Frederick George. George was buried on 14<sup>th</sup> January 1910, aged 55. Decimus had married Mary Jane and they had Percy (1895-1973) and William (1898-1970). Decimus

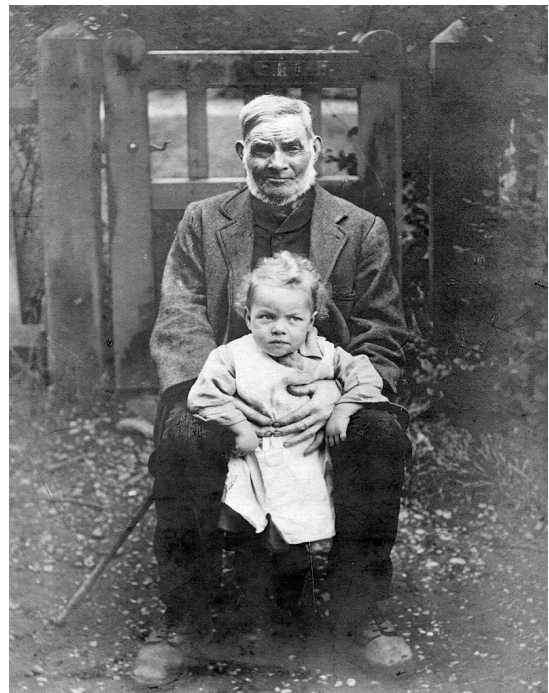
was buried on 25<sup>th</sup> October 1932, aged 70 and Mary Jane on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1922. It is Mary Jane who is pictured outside Briar Oak on page 82.

Descendants of this family still live in the village.

### *The Dicken Family*

William Dicken was born in 1787 and he married Sarah Gadsby. They had five children, Joseph (1818), William (1820-1858), Ann (1822 – died aged 3 months), James (1823-1842) and Decimus John (1831-1878). William, their father, was buried on the 9<sup>th</sup> October 1832, aged 45.

William married Ann Hatchett and they had six children: James (1843-1930), Jane (1849), William (1850), Susannah (1853), Ralph (1857) and Thomas (1859). William was a farm labourer and died in an accident, aged only 38. After his death, Ann went on to be market carrier for most of the century. Her son, James, married Mary Rowley – youngest daughter of Charles Rowley the schoolmaster. James and Mary had five children: Charles (1873-1950), Anna Maria (1874-1899), James (1876), William (1878-1880) and Susan (1881-1950). Charles' only daughter is pictured below with her grandfather, James Dicken. This is Mary Ann Dicken – now Mary Radford of School Lane.



*James Dicken (1843-1930) – holding his granddaughter Mary Ann Dicken (Mrs Radford)*

The 1841 census places Decimus John, aged 10, living with his uncle, John Gadsby, at the Black Horse. By the age of 20, Decimus John was still living at the Black Horse working as a blacksmith. By 1861, he had married and changed profession: he was working as a

farmer, employing one man, a “*machine proprietor*”. He owned four acres of land along the Lullington Road. This land eventually became part of Edingale House Farm. *The Post Office Directory of Staffordshire for 1872*, lists Decimus John Dicken as a “*threshing machine owner*”.

Decimus married Emma, from Longford. They had six children: Sarah (1859), Frank (1861-1935), Decimus John (1863-1899), Elizabeth (1866-1901), Ann (1868) and William (1870). Decimus died on 28<sup>th</sup> September 1878, aged 48.

Frank married Margaret and they had nine children: Annie (1883), Emma (1885), Harry (1889), Decimus John (1891-1960), Georgina (1893), William (1895), Frederick (1897), and Frank (1900-1964).

One remaining descendant of this line lives in the village today.

#### *The Gadsby Family*

The Gadsbys were another of the families that dominated Edingale from the seventeenth century. They were mainly blacksmiths and agricultural labourers and were the innkeepers of the Black Horse for most of the nineteenth century. They were all born in Edingale.

The Edingale register tells us that John and Margaret Gadsby had 12 children born from 1684 until 1706. A number of these were twins. Nicholas who was born in 1700, married twice and his grandson, John, married Ann Hatchett in 1782. John and Ann went on to have ten children who appear throughout the 1800 censuses. Their son, John, was the victualler of the Black Horse pub. Their daughter Sarah married William Dicken.

Joseph, who was born in 1800, had a grandson, Joseph Dicken Gadsby, born in 1839. He in turn married Anne from Barton-under-Needwood and had five children one of whom was Joseph born in 1872. It is this Joseph Gadsby who appears in the Greens’ wedding picture on page 47. Joseph left Edingale, but returned to be buried on the 18<sup>th</sup> May 1936, aged 64.

#### *The Green Family*

The 1891 census for Croxall lists Walter Green as head of the household. He was born in 1864 in Hanbury, Staffordshire and was described as a “*plate layer on the railway*”, aged 27. He was married to Eliza (1865-1918) who was born in Croxall. Their children included: Bertha (1887), Fred (1889), Frank (1891), George (1892-1963), Ada Nellie (1894), Herbert (1895-1963), Emily Louise (1898-1906) and Arthur (1899-1981). By the 1901 census he had changed his job to “*stockman on farm*” and his family had grown considerably.

Fred married Nelly and they had one son, Fred. Herbert married twice, first to Annie Berry and secondly to Doris Hill; their wedding photograph is shown on page 47. He had no children. Arthur married Maude Hills and they had four children: Emily, who married Fred Bacon, Grace, Vic and Gordon.

George married Nell Clark and their children included: Gwen, Roger, Alf, George, Ken, Raymond, Fred, Chris and Bob (twins), and Bruce. Roger married Ivy and they are fondly remembered by many villagers for their long involvement with the village hall. The Green family were also founding members of the Edingale Swifts, along with the Duggins family, and were active in the Garden Guild.

#### *The Kinson Family*

James and Elizabeth Kinson moved to Edingale as a young couple and had five children: Samuel (1790), James (1791), Hannah (1793), Thomas (1795) and Francis (1796).

Thomas married Elizabeth Hall and they had five children: John (1834), Eliza (1835), George (1838), William (1839) and Emma (1842). Thomas was a gardener and seedsman and went on to become a grocer. His son, William, also went on to become a grocer. Eliza married John Gadsby.

John married Fanny Collier and had eight children: Eliza, Charles, Arthur, Joseph, Amos, Emma, Fanny and Alice. By 1881, John had left Edingale to live in Rosliston with his family. His son, Joseph, married and settled with his family in Cotton-in-the-Elms and had four sons, Sidney Joseph, Percy, Arthur and Cyril.

Cyril returned to Edingale when he married Julia (May) Hemmings who ran the Holly Bush, and Sidney Joseph's son is our own Edingale resident, Eric Kinson.

#### *The Duggins Family*

The Duggins family is relatively new to Edingale but they influenced the village for most of the twentieth century with Alfred running the Black Horse and founding the Edingale Swifts football team, his son John running two village shops and John's brother, Alf, taking over the Black Horse from his father.

Alfred Edward Duggins was born in 1898 and, with his wife Daisy, became licensee of the Black Horse in 1930. They had nine children: Alf, Phyllis, George, Eric, John, Gordon, Ronald, Daisy and Brian. Daisy died in December 1950, aged 48, in a tragic accident. Alfred Edward had been a professional footballer and he and his sons established the Edingale Swifts in the late 1940s.

Alfred Edward died on the 14<sup>th</sup> May 1969, aged 71, and his eldest son Alf took over the running of the Black Horse in 1963 with his wife, Lena, and ran it until his retirement in 1993. Alf died on 9<sup>th</sup> October 1998. Another son, George, worked for Jos Holland for many years, latterly as farm manager, Eric was a professional footballer, and Ron was the licensee of a pub in Atherstone.

As mentioned, his son, John, built a second village shop and house next to The Firs in 1963 which he ran with his wife, Iris. From 1978, John and Iris rented, and then bought the shop and Old Post Office, opposite the Black Horse, from Ben Gamble. Their eldest son,

Michael, subsequently ran this shop. John and Iris sold the Old Post Office to Gill and Gordon Hobbs in 1987.

## **The First World War**

When the First World War broke out, Edingale, like every other village in the country, suffered the loss of husbands, brothers, fathers and sons. There is a plaque in Edingale church in memory of our war dead:

*Lest We Forget*  
*In grateful remembrance of those brave men of Edingale*  
*who gave up their lives in the Great War 1914 – 1919*  
*RIP*  
*W Wilcox (203757) – Private – 1 Leicestershire Regiment*  
*J Royle – Private – South Staffordshire Regiment*  
*JH Hobley (41120) – Private – 11 Manchester Regiment*  
*AH Sutton (4369) – Sergeant – South Staffordshire Regiment Depot*  
*J Oakley (77072) – Acting Lance Corporal – 1 Tank Corps*  
*FH Ryan – Private – 23 Northumberland Fusiliers (4 Tyneside Scottish)*  
*WJ Wood (71943) – Lance Corporal – 1 Sherwood Foresters*  
*(Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment)*

**William Wilcox** – was killed in action in France on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1918, aged 36. He has no known grave, but is commemorated on the Arras Memorial in France. Private Wilcox was the husband of Ethel Annie Wilcox of Edingale, whom he left with young children. The children can be seen in the 1925 school photograph on page 63. His son, Tom, was groom for Jos Holland and one time parish councillor and churchwarden.

William had been employed by the Reverend William Garland, vicar of Edingale, prior to enlisting in the army in May 1917. He had been in France for about five months when he met his death in the Battle of St Quentin, on the second day of the German Spring offensive of 1918. In this action the 1 Leicesters lost a total of 74 officers and men. There is an article regarding his death, together with a photograph of Private Wilcox, in the *Tamworth Herald* of 20<sup>th</sup> April 1918.

**John Henry Hobley** – was killed in action in France on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1916. He has no known grave, but is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial in France.

Private Hobley was the husband of Lizzie and father to Win, Ron and Bet and they lived at Lilac Cottage. He originally served in the North Staffordshire Regiment before he transferred to the Manchester Regiment. As previously mentioned, Win Hobley opened up a shop at Lilac Cottage.

**Frank Harrington Ryan** – was killed in action in France on the 5<sup>th</sup> June 1917, aged 29. He has no known grave, but is commemorated on the Arras Memorial in France.

Private Ryan was the son of Jeremiah Ryan, and the husband of Mabel Florence Ryan, with whom he had three children. Prior to joining the army in September 1916, he was employed by Mr FG Allton, as baker and deliverer, and served initially in the Army Service Corps and then the West Yorkshire Regiment. There is an article regarding his death, together with a photograph of Private Ryan, in the *Tamworth Herald* of 29<sup>th</sup> September 1917.

**Alfred Henry Sutton** died and was buried in Edingale churchyard with full military honours on the 15<sup>th</sup> July 1915, aged 38. His is the only war grave in the village and the War Grave Commission sees to its upkeep.

Sergeant Sutton was the son of Fanny Sutton. He was a regular soldier with nearly 21 years' service, spending the early part of his career in India and two years in South Africa. On the outbreak of war he was sent from Aldershot to France with the South Staffordshire Regiment as part of the British Expeditionary Force.

He arrived in France on the 12<sup>th</sup> August 1914, but the strain of the campaign was too great for him and he was invalided home six weeks before he died. After spending two weeks in hospital, he returned to his mother in Edingale where he died. There is an article regarding his death in the *Tamworth Herald* of 24<sup>th</sup> July 1915.

**William John Wood** – was killed in action in France on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 1918, aged 19. He has no known grave, but is commemorated on the Poizeres Memorial in France.

William's grandfather was also William Wood, who was born in Walton and came to work as a waggoner at Broadfields Farm, Edingale in 1861. He married Emma and they had eight children. His eldest son, Frank, was a railway platelayer. He married Jane and they had May, William, born in 1899, and Selina. His father, Frank, was buried in Edingale in 1946, aged 77.

**Joseph Royle** – served in the South Staffordshire Regiment but there is little known about his death. Private Royle was born in Edingale in 1877 in a long line of Royles. He was the son of William and Hannah Royle and the brother of Mary, Ann, John, Arthur, Emma, William and Lizzie. His father, William, died in 1915, aged 79 and his mother, Hannah, died in 1918, aged 76.

**James Oakley** – died in France on the 29<sup>th</sup> September 1918 and was buried at St Sever cemetery extension in France.

Acting Lance-Corporal Oakley was born in Rangemore, Staffordshire and enlisted in Tamworth. He originally served in the 7 South Staffordshire Regiment arriving in the Balkans with his regiment on 21<sup>st</sup> November 1915. There is an entry reporting his death in the *Tamworth Herald* of 9<sup>th</sup> November 1918.

**Charles Stephenson** – Charles is not mentioned on the church plaque. He lived with his wife at the Post Office in Edingale before joining up, originally enlisting with the North Staffordshire Regiment. Charles was serving with the York and Lancasters when he was declared missing in action on April 18<sup>th</sup> 1918, after the first Battle of Kemmel – fought as part of the offensive in Flanders. Charles’ death was officially confirmed 17 months later. He has no known grave.

His brother Private Percival Stephenson was 30 when he was killed during the third Battle of Ypres on October 16<sup>th</sup> 1917. Their parents were Thomas and Elizabeth Stephenson of Ludgate, The Leys, Tamworth. Charles’ widow is pictured with Mrs Blakeways on page 84.

**There is a roll of honour in Croxall Church that reads:**

Anson Lt. G.H.	Staffs Yeomanry
Anson Sgt Major	Officers Training Corps
Appletree Capt R.C.	R.G. Artillery
Gill Sgt F.	Remount Dept
Godding George	Army South Corps
Horton George	Sherwood Forresters (killed)
Levitt Princep Miss M	Redcross Nurse
Neilson Capt W	4 <sup>th</sup> Hussars
Patterson J	Army South Corps
Savage Corp W	Sherwood Forresters

Unlike the Edingale list, this roll of honour commemorates those people from Croxall parish who served in the forces, rather than only those who died.

## The Second World War

Many Edingale men were in reserved occupations – agricultural workers and miners – and so there were no village casualties in the second world war. Bombs did fall over the parish on a couple of occasions, and, as ARP warden, Len Dicken recalled watching the bombers target Coventry in 1940. A German bomber crashed over the parish border in Lullington. Fred Bacon remembers the shattered fuselage being transported through the village to RAF Lichfield at Fradley. The pilot is buried at Fradley church.

The school logbooks state:

*“6<sup>th</sup> September 1939 – The promised evacuees from West Bromwich did not arrive.”*

*“11 September 1939 – School reopened for both junior and senior as the senior schools in Tamworth were occupied by soldiers.”*

*“30<sup>th</sup> August 1940 – School opened at 10.00am instead of 9.00am after a week of night air-raids.”*

In fact, the evacuees did indeed arrive, and families from as far away as Kent were billeted in the village. Miss Abel of Schofield Lane was hostess to a number of evacuees and remained in contact with them long after the war.

The parish council minute book gives us a further glimpse of life during the war years:

- ❑ A demonstration was given to the council on gas masks and air raid precautions on 29<sup>th</sup> September 1938;
- ❑ Following this, volunteers were requested for first aid and fitting of gas masks;
- ❑ A request for additional sandbags was made on the 14<sup>th</sup> March 1941;
- ❑ No elections were held in 1940 – existing councillors had to remain in office;
- ❑ There was a war-time allotments campaign in 1941-42 and any extra land had to be cultivated as allotments. A notice was fixed on the church notice board asking anyone desiring an allotment to make an application to the clerk;
- ❑ “Salute the Soldier” week commenced in July 1944;
- ❑ Arrangements for VE Day were discussed on the 7<sup>th</sup> May 1945. A party was arranged for children and the funds were raised by voluntary subscriptions for tea and sports. Mrs Harvey was secretary and Miss Colclough treasurer.

Many local men were in the Home Guard. They were in a shared platoon with Harlaston. Fred Bacon (who, like many local men, was by then a miner, and thus in a reserved occupation) recalls exercises over the river meadows practising bomb throwing, and marching drills with pitchforks for weapons.





*Edingale's Home Guard outside the school- courtesy of Norma Thorpe*

**Back Row – left to right** - William Baxter (from Harlaston), Jim Gladsbury, Roger Green, Fred Bacon, George Hallam, Sam Hallam. **Front Row** - Arthur Rowley, Bill Harvey, Tom Wilcox, Arthur Pears?, Lieutenant Arthurs, Vic Green, Ned Hallam, Reg Dell

### **Characters from the twentieth century**

**Tom Wilcox** was the son of Private William Wilcox, who was killed in action in 1918. Tom was groom for Jos Holland for 41 years and in 1973 was awarded the Royal Agricultural Society of England long-service medal by the Duchess of Kent at the Royal Show. Tom had worked for Mr Holland continuously since leaving school. He was quoted in a newspaper as saying, *“Farming has changed a lot since we first began working. It is much easier, and everything is a lot more mechanised – there was nowhere near the amount of machinery in the early days that there is today.”* He also said, *“It should really be our wives and families and employers who get these awards for putting up with us for so long.”*

Tom married Rose who also worked for the Hollands for 30 years up until Jos's death. They had six daughters. Tom had three sisters, Christine Harvey, who taught at Mary Howard school for 42 years, Alice Dicken and Evelyn Duggins. Tom was a churchwarden and parish councillor as well as a member of the village hall committee and a founder member of the Produce Guild.

**Frank Baxter** came out of the army in 1917 having seen service in Flanders. He was invalided out having lost his hand and part of his arm. He was the village postman for 48 years and he recalled on many occasions that he had walked more than 132,000 miles (or

“*twice round the world*” as he so often said) on foot around the village and outlying farms delivering the post. When he retired in June 1965, a door-to-door collection for him was made at the instigation of the parish council.

**Bill Smith** became the Parish Clerk in 1946 and served the council in this capacity for 37 years. He came to the village in 1924 and served as churchwarden for more than 30 years. He was also secretary to the village hall committee and youth club leader. A badge of office for the chairman of the parish council was created in memory of his death in 1978. The design of the badge includes a hand-painted picture of the tree roots and the Staffordshire Knot.

**Ben Gamble** was one of the last two village blacksmiths. After he had served his apprenticeship in a blacksmith’s shop in Tamworth, Ben moved to Edingale in 1923 and opened his own forge. His sister had bought the village store (Old Post Office) opposite to the Black Horse public house and he lived with her. For more than 15 years Ben was the man who shod local horses, but, during the Second World War, he was forced to give up to help his sister with all the extra work caused by rationing. The shop closed in 1960. Ben continued to live in the cottage next door to the old village store and was a fund of memories of old Edingale until his death.

**Joe Golubic** arrived in Edingale just after the Second World War, from his native Yugoslavia. He became the village blacksmith/engineer, first in Jos Holland’s yard and then operating from ‘Fort Joe’.

He had twice been in the midst of conflict, once caused by the Nazis and once by the Russians in a raid on Belgrade, so he was determined it would not happen to him again. He therefore decided to build himself and his wife a nuclear fall-out shelter, to the rear of ‘Fort Joe’. He began work in 1963 by building a bunker 16 feet below ground with 12-inch-thick concrete walls.

On top, he constructed a workshop and living quarters. A steel and lead door provided access to the first floor of the nuclear bunker. With a calor gas stove and gas supplies, canned food and filtered air, Mr Golubic thought he could hold out for at least six weeks in the event of a nuclear attack. He died in 1982 at the age of 80 years

**Arthur Walter Berry** was born in Edingale and was our own poet. For a long period, he had a poem published each week in the *Tamworth Herald* and he composed one entitled ‘Edingale’ reproduced on the back cover of this book. Arthur is pictured in the wedding photograph on page 47 with his wife, Fanny, and son, Walter Joseph Berry. Arthur died in 1939, aged 69. His granddaughters are Mary Fern and Margaret Kinson.

**Bill Harvey** is the second villager to be awarded the MBE – for his years of dedication to maintaining the churchyard. The nomination was made by the Parochial Church Council and awarded in the year 2000.

Bill's wife, Christine (nee Wilcox), was born in the village and had been a past pupil of the Mary Howard School. She returned to the school as an Infant teacher and taught there for 42 years. She was always a keen supporter of the school and church. Bill accepted the honour for his wife as well as himself. When Mrs Harvey retired from teaching, she wrote the following poem for the children of Mary Howard School. It was read at her funeral.

*For the children*

The art of learning I've often said,  
Is looking and listening and using your  
head.

I thought – there's something I can do,  
And so I've written a poem for you.  
I won't describe you one by one,  
But I shall remember what you've done.  
The way you work – the way you play,  
The funny things I've heard you say,  
The Christmas Plays – each one a hit!  
And Sidney Carter kept us fit.  
On Mothering Sunday – the Simnel  
Cake,  
That top year juniors helped to make.  
You've told me what's the style in  
clothes  
But honestly girls, I couldn't wear those.  
Long skirts just don't suit me at all

I look as if I'm "Off to the ball".

You've told me when the sport was on  
Who scored 147 and who scored none,  
But who chose the best team – Liverpool?  
I did of course – see I'm no fool.  
If I've made you work – I hope I've been  
fair  
It was only because I really care  
About how you work, behave and play,  
And that's all I have to say  
Except to wish you health and happiness,  
In whatever you do, have great success.  
Just one more thing perhaps you've  
guessed  
For me – Edingale children are the best.

**Norah Mason** is the third villager to be appointed the MBE – for her many years of service to the village. The award was made in 2006.

### **Groups and societies in the village**

Before television and work dominated our lives, there were many societies and activities in Edingale, especially in the 30 years or so following the war. Finding a venue for events was a perennial problem and, capturing the mood of the times, Arthur Ward, a member of the parish council, reported to the meeting on March 22<sup>nd</sup> 1944 that he had been approached by several parishioners with a request for a village hall. The council discussed whether to build a new hall or convert the old school (that is, the 1820 school room). It was agreed to form a committee and hold an open meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> March 1944. This meeting concluded that it would be better to purchase some land and erect their own 'parish hall'.

It was a long nine years of fund-raising after this first meeting before the first village hall was bought (second hand) and erected in the village. One of the hall's major users initially was the Edingale and Croxall Women's Institute, which held monthly meetings until the 1960s, when it merged with other local branches. Another significant group was the

Edingale and District Produce Guild. For many years this thriving guild existed in Edingale, running a shop in Hatchett Lane and an annual show and gala at the hall. In later years, the members arranged holidays abroad, including a couple of famous tours to Majorca – very exotic at the time!

Guides and brownies met in the 1970s and 1980s under the tutelage of Margaret Dear, and Dorothy Sears from Church Walk ran a dancing class, teaching tap and ballet, in the 1970s. There have also been badminton clubs and various attempts have been made over the years to run a youth club. This was a strong institution in the late 1950s including several drama productions by the club, directed by Norah Mason. A group that still survives (though on a shoe string) is Edingale playgroup. In 1973, a group of mothers got together and decided to form a playgroup. The first 11 children met in the old village hall. From that time the pre-school playgroup has continued serve the village. Close links have been established with the Mary Howard School and Rising Fives takes place once a week in the school.



*Edingale and Croxall Women's Institute on an outing to Cadbury's  
– courtesy of Gordon Green*

#### *Edingale Swifts Football Club*

Another surviving – and flourishing – institution is the football club. Alfred Edward Duggins and his sons established Edingale Swifts in the late 1940s with the Green family.

Arthur Ward of White Knights was president, Alfred Edward was club chairman, Alf Green was honorary secretary, Roger Green was trainer, Ray Illsley was groundsman and Stan Shaw was captain. The team consisted mostly of villagers with others from local villages. The colours were green and white. Mr Ward donated the goal posts (they are still in use) and he presented a trophy to the team – the A L Ward Trophy – to be played for by teams from the Trent Valley League. This still stands on a shelf of the Black Horse today.

The team played in the Tamworth and Trent Valley Leagues and later in the Lichfield League and Burton League on Saturdays. When Sunday football started, Edingale was one of the founder members of the Tamworth Sunday League and still plays in it.



*Edingale Swifts - around 1949 – courtesy of Janet Bowman*

**Back Row** (left to right) – A E Duggins (chairman), George Green, Eric Kinson, Gordon Green, Alf Green, Fred Green, George Carter, Jack Carey (trainer)

**Front Row** – Ray Green, Gordon Duggins, Ken Green, Gerald Hale, Des Dicken



*Edingale Swifts – Team from the 1950s (at the tree roots) – courtesy of Janet Bowman*



Alf Duggins senior (standing) **Back Row** left to right – Alf Green, Roger Green, George Broadhurst, Keith Rowley, Moss Rowley, Denis Billings, Eric Fern, Bob Green, George Duggins, Kenny Motram (partly hidden) **Front Row** – Ray Green, Bruce Green, Stan Fern, Denis Fern, Brian Duggins, Stuart Gullivar

#### **Other village events in the twentieth century**

##### *King George V's Silver Jubilee Celebrations – 1935*

Celebrations for the silver jubilee of King George V were first discussed by the parish council in March 1935, when it was agreed that part of the cost could be met from the rates “*not to exceed two pence in the pound*”. They decided that the whole of the parish should be provided with tea, followed by sports and a church service.

Mrs Charlton of Croxall Hall was appointed to “*carry out the arrangements for providing tea with the power to appoint a committee to assist her*”. A subscription list was opened with Miss Colclough (head teacher at the school) as honorary secretary; Revd Thomas Daniels became vice-chairman; Mr Jos Holland, became honorary treasurer and Captain Charlton, from Croxall Hall, became sports captain.

##### *King George VI's Coronation - 1937*

It was decided that the committee that was appointed to carry out the silver jubilee festivities of King George V, should be reappointed to organise festivities for King George VI's coronation. They were given the power to “*add to their number*”. It was agreed that part of the cost could be met from the rates again, “*not to exceed two pence in the pound*”.

The village celebrations took place at Church Farm, then owned by Samuel Thompstone. At that time, the farmyard extended across Church Lane to include a large brick barn. This was on the site of some of the present Church Lane MaColl houses. Refreshments were provided in the barn.

##### *The Queen's Coronation Celebrations - 1953*

A special parish meeting was held on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> November 1952 to discuss ways of saving funds for the coronation, to be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1953. Arnold Ward (of White Knights) offered to give all the children up to school-leaving age a memento and he was appointed chairman of the grandly entitled ‘Coronation committee’. It was agreed that the children would have a tea party and a ladies’ committee consisting of Miss Colclough (head teacher), Mrs Hopkins, Mrs Sketchley, Mrs Clarridge, Mrs Welch, Mrs Aucote and Mrs Broadhurst was set up to arrange it. The adults were given a ticket with a price on for a cold meal and this was organised by a gentlemen’s committee. This consisted of Mr G Cooper, Mr A Green, Mr M Sketchley, Mr A Rowley, Mr J Hopkins, Mr K Green and Mr Hinds.

There were five floats filled with school children. The horses were in full show regalia – their manes and tails plaited in red, white and blue. The first float carried the carnival queen (Catherine Ingram) and her maids.

Everyone met in the stableyard, where the drays had been decorated, and the procession started through the village, past the Black Horse pub, down to the school. Adults in fancy dress followed the procession and houses en route had been decorated in red, white and blue. At the school, the procession turned and headed for the village hall



*Children on the coronation float – courtesy of Gordon Green*

**Front row** (left to right) Anetta Rowley, Jennifer Simpson (holding posy)

**Middle row** Judy McLoughlin, Clifford Green (boy kneeling), Freda Rowley, Heather Aucott slightly sitting behind)

**Back row** Valerie Broadhurst (standing), *queen* Catherine Ingram (sitting), Gordon Green, John Potts



*Coronation “wedding” procession outside the stableyard – courtesy of Gordon Green*

(On bicycle) Brenda Cliffe (Garland), 'groom' Joyce Smith, 'bride' Anne Rowley; next 'bride' Barbara Green and 'groom' Ivy Green; wet ladies, Ken Green and Jimmy Ingram. Children were presented with a coronation cup and saucer and a set of coins were given out. Refreshments were available in the village hall and a whole afternoon's activities were organised on a field off Pessall Lane. There were outdoor skittles and sporting events for the children where small prizes were given out.

### *The Queen's Silver Jubilee Celebrations - 1977*

The parish council again organised a silver jubilee committee. At that time, there were many organisations in the village and there was a good response. These were:

- |                              |                                 |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • The village hall committee | • Edingale Swifts football club |
| • The playgroup              | • Mary Howard School            |
| • The youth club             | • The parish council            |
| • The garden guild           | • The brownies                  |
|                              | • The church choir              |

The day began with a church service with Revd Perrins, the now familiar pattern of floats going through the village and a carnival. Mr Holland agreed that a shire horse could lead the procession. Silver jubilee day itself was cold and windy and people lined the route up and down the village watching and cheering. The new village hall wasn't quite ready for use so the children had a party in the old hall. Senior citizens had a supper at the Mary Howard School. The day ended with a dance in the school.



*Horses, large and small at the Silver Jubilee parade: George Duggins with shire and Mr and Mrs Aucott with pony cart – courtesy of Ned and Margaret Davey*

### *Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee – June 2002*

The village hall committee again organised a village event, with the parish council paying for the entertainment. To commemorate the event, the parish council commissioned Helen Pilgrim to paint her views of the parish, and a print from this, along with a copy of this book, was made available to every household in the parish. Again, younger children received commemorative medals.



## Conclusion

So what does this review of our history tell us about our own times? To some, recalling the past brings a feeling of wistfulness for things lost: certainly, it seems true that our parish had a greater sense of inward looking self-sufficiency in times gone by. However, while we might regret the loss of 'community' and cohesion, the village is certainly more open to outsiders now than it once was.

A surprising feature is the extent to which our history still influences us today. Edingale remains a 'border' village, on the edge of school catchment areas, dioceses, counties: never sure whether it is in the East or West Midlands. Other historical trends in matters as diverse as schooling and landholding have also shaped our present day experiences.

Another big theme is the recent – and very rapid – decline in agriculture as the economic driver of our locality: indeed, the present absence of business and commerce more generally in the parish is also very noticeable. We are largely a residential, not an economic, community now.

There are challenges for the future. No one would pretend that the burden of looking after our two churches is spread evenly among us; and they are our most direct link with our past. Even compared with other local villages, there are many fewer parish groups of any sort, imposing a greater burden on a small number of volunteers. But, on the bright side, the last major injection of 'community spirit' came when the new comers in the Charter Homes, Church Lane and then Blakeways began to take their place on village forums. With such rapid expansion of the village recently, that might happen again.

And nothing is static. New patterns of white-collar working are already beginning to mean that many more villagers are working from home, using information technology and telephony – and thus spending considerable time based in the village. We may no longer need a shop, but do we need an IT resource centre?

Perhaps, without realising it, we are starting to re-invent patterns of village-based work that can be dated back to the origins of our more than 2000-year-old history?