

**ELSIE HIBBERT (NEE BROOKS) -
A COLEORTON CENTENARIAN
IN 2013**



PICTURE: BETH WALSH / LEBW20131120H-008

CELEBRATING: Elsie Hibbert marked her 100th birthday at Tilson House, in Coalville

Maid to travel - Elsie reflects on century

BY SAMUEL T STEWART - NOVEMBER 2024

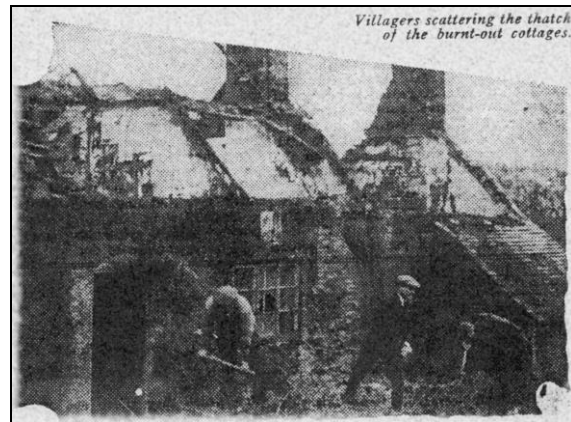
Elsie Hibbert (nee Lord) was born in Coleorton in November 1913 and became a live in maid for the Beaumonts' at Coleorton Hall. Later in life she became a cleaner for the NCB who took over Coleorton Hall as their East Midlands headquarters in 1948.

Elsie got married to a Mr. George Hibbert c.1934, following which she moved out of Coleorton Hall and they are recorded as having gone to live in one of a pair of semi-detached cottages, named 'Cornerways, part way between the 'Alms Houses' and the War Memorial at the junction of Farm Town Lane, as it is now. This of course was before the Coleorton bypass was built, which changed the road layout. Elsie and George had one son and a grandson named Dominic.



The above is a photograph of the pair of semi-detached thatched cottages, reported to be 500 years old in a 1932 newspaper article, half way up Church Hill on the LH side, one of which was thought to be occupied by Elsie and George. The photograph was taken pre 1922 as the War Memorial which was installed at the front of the Alms Houses in 1922 at the Loughborough and Ashby Road junction is not there. The Alms houses are the ivy clad buildings at the top RH side of the photograph.

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The thatched roofs on these cottages caught fire on Good Friday 1932 and only the walls were left intact. The Yates and Birds families who occupied them at the time were made homeless. The author assumes they were rebuilt in order for Elsie and George to be occupying them circa two years later.

The cottages have been one property for some years and are still named 'Cornerways'

Elsie celebrated her 100th birthday at Tilson House care home, Coalville in November 2013 where she had apparently moved to be near her family at Whitwick (see front cover photograph). At the time of her 100th birthday in 2013, she was the oldest living person in Coleorton

According to a newspaper report in the Leicester Mercury on her birthday, Elsie apparently lived to travel, and went all over the world. She recalled flying on Concord and seeing the Pyramids. When asked by the newspaper reporter how she had lived to be 100, the only thing she could think of was that she had never smoked.

Elsie's mother's name was Florrie Brookes (nee Lord) who was born in Coleorton. She married a George Brookes. She had two brothers named Thomas and Nathan Lord who were both killed at Coleorton 'Bug & Wink' colliery, and they of course were Elsie's uncles. Thomas was a great uncle of the author's wife (Sheila Stewart).

George and Florrie Brooks lived in one of a pair of semi-detached cottages on the RH side at the bottom of the track leading to the Paddock, down the side of Coleorton's former Post Office. These cottages were burnt down following a lightning strike which came down the chimney and through the grate when they were at home. George manage to get both his wife Florrie and daughter out of the house, but sadly he was killed a couple of years later in a motor car accident. Apparently this caused Florrie to have a breakdown from which she never recovered.



Mr. George Brookes (inset)

Len Benson related to his daughter that he recalled standing with his Mum at the lounge window in Benson's cottage in the 'Woolrooms' watching the smoke billowing upwards and not realising it was his great aunt's house on fire.

These cottages must have been rebuilt, as the author recalls visiting Joe Robinson and his wife Fannie when they lived there. They kept fowls and the author as a lad used to visit with his father to collect eggs. Joe Robinson also ran Bert Adcocks small ice cream factory across the track opposite to the cottages, so a free ice cream came with the visit. This was made in large aluminium barrels with an inner core between which ice was packed. I can still remember the special smell that pervaded the factory.