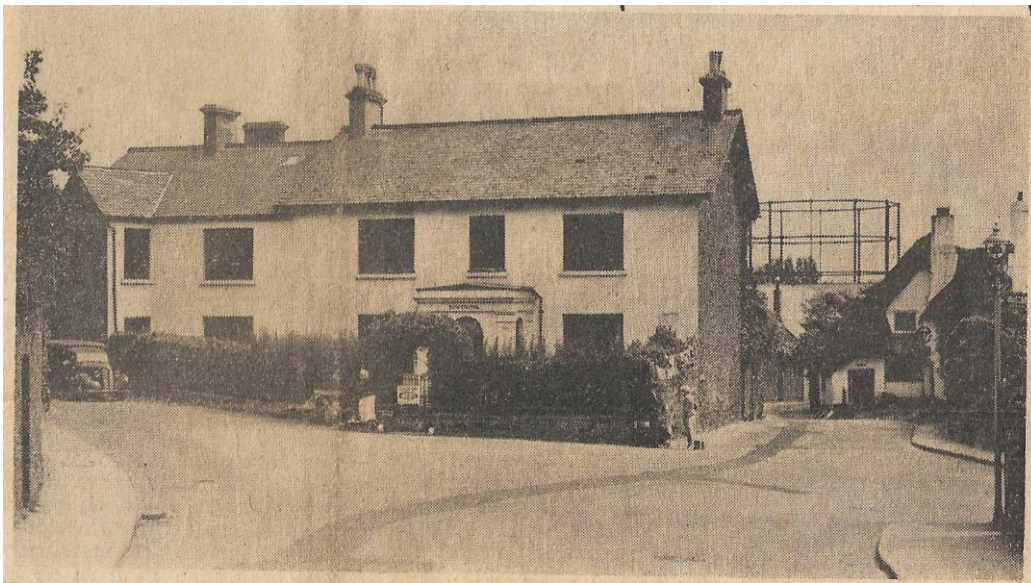


Solved! The Mystery of the Cecil Road Stones

In the last Newsletter, we asked if anyone knew the story behind three stones which are built into the red sandstone wall on the right of Cecil Road as you approach the Milk Bottle junction. Our thanks go to David Wotton who has provided the following information.

A large house existed on the corner of Well Street and, what is today, Cecil Road (see below) known as Efford House (on some maps it is referred to as Efford Farm). This House was demolished in 1958 as part of a road widening scheme. In the photograph, to the right of the House is Kirkham Cottage, and behind that the former Gas Works can be seen.

It was formerly the home of the Lyde family – who were connected to the cider producers, the Hunt family. Richard Hunt (born 1777, died 1849) was a local landowner who provided land on which the Southfield Methodist Chapel on Southfield Road was built in 1818. His body is buried in a vault beneath the Chapel. Another resident of Efford House was Rev. James Lyde Hunt, Vicar of Paignton Parish Church, who died in 1921. Probably the final resident was William W Lyde, listed as living at Efford House in the 1941 Kelly's Directory.



During the demolition work, a number of bodies were found buried, but nobody could identify who they were or when they were interred. The bones were moved to Paignton Cemetery and put into a single grave. You solve one mystery, and another pops up!

David Wotton explained that the three stones were part of Efford House, and after its demolition they were incorporated into the wall to mark the spot where the House had stood. The stones (below) depict first a key – unfortunately David doesn't know what the key symbolises - then the Lyde/Hunt family crest and finally the name 'John Lyde 1745' – presumably the first of the Lyde/Hunt family to live there. Thank you David – that's one mystery solved.

