

Back in Time - 7 - The Elms and the Ermen Family

by John Rabbitt

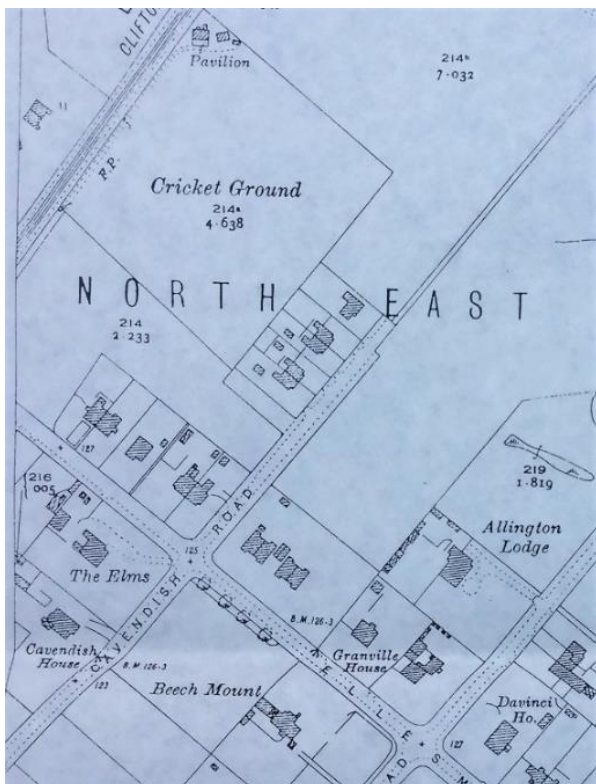
Not much to say about this 1960's photograph of Cavendish Road, potholes are obviously nothing new!



Cavendish Road circa 1960



Cavendish Road 2020



The roof of a large house you can see in the distance is The Elms which was at the junction of Ellesmere Road and Cavendish Road. The Elms was one of the largest 'villas' built in Ellesmere Park and was originally owned by Margaret Crook.

One of the best known of families associated with Ellesmere Park was the Ermen family. Francis Ermen J.P. resided at The Elms in 1898. Previously in, 1891, he had lived at Holcombe on Ellesmere Road. He was related to Godfrey Ermen who headed the distinguished cotton firm, Ermen & Engels, located at the Victoria Mill in Weaste; other mills in Eccles and Patricroft also formed part of the Ermen & Engels company.

The Ermen cotton business was started by the three Ermen brothers, Peter, Anthony and Godfrey. The three Ermen brothers went into partnership with a German cotton manufacturer, Friedrich Engels (Snr.) forming the company Ermen & Engels. Friedrich Engels (Snr.) dispatched his son Friedrich Engels (Jnr.) from Germany to Salford to work in the business, probably to watch over the other partners.

Historically the firm Ermen & Engels was important because it was the firm in which Friedrich Engels Jnr (1820 - 1895) worked during his time in Manchester between 1842 and 1844. While working at this firm, Engels gathered information for his famous book "On the Condition of the Working Class in England" (1845). Engels lived mainly in England after 1842 and in 1844 began his life-long association with Karl Marx (1818 - 1883). They collaborated on the "Communist Manifesto" of 1848. For the rest of Engel's life he aided Karl Marx in his political endeavours. Friedrich Engels died in London in 1895.



The Marx and Engels Statue at the Marx–Engels Forum in Berlin

After his brothers Peter and Anthony left the business Godfrey Ermen ran it successfully for many years and retired to live in Devon where he died a very wealthy man in 1899. His Will, running to 28 pages, made provision for over 50 of his relatives. More importantly for us, he instructed the residue of his estate to be used for the benefit of any charitable or educational worthwhile endeavour. Presumably the Godfrey Ermen School in Eccles was one such beneficiary.

It would be interesting to search the census records to investigate how many of the Ermen family lived in The Elms over the 100 years of its existence.

Details of the Ermen family can be found at:

<https://www.manfamily.org/about/other-families/loeck-family/may-family/wolff-family/schwabe-family/stephan-samuel-schwabe-1803-1878/frederica-sara-schwabe-1834-1919/ermen-family/>

and some information relating to Ermen & Engels cotton manufacturers can be found at:

https://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Ermen_and_Engels

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