

WILLIAM GODDARD LANKESTER b 1798 – d 1875

Owner of Tudor House from 1860. The property remained in the Lankester family until 1886.

By 1795 the property was sublet and after 1800 Tudor House was again in multiple occupancy. By the middle of the 19th century the property was divided into three parts. Different families or businesses owned or leased parts of the house. In **1860 the whole property had been acquired by his father William Lankester**, the principal of a long established firm of iron and brass founders and furnishing ironmongers – very active in public affairs of the town. It remained in the Lankester family until 1886. In 1877 William Goddard Lankester, ironmonger and manager of the Floating Bridge Company resided at the property. He was also very active in public affairs.

Mrs Mary Parker and others (Holders of the two mortgages made in 1852, of Richard Blunt and Jane Amor, following the deaths of them both, and Henry Cooke, legatee of Colson Bernard), to William Lankester of Southampton, ironfounder (father of W.G. Lankester), James Sharp of Southampton gent, Charles Beacon Phippard of Southampton, draper and James Caldecott Sharp of Southampton, gent.
(Conveyance and Assignment 9th December 1860).

Mary Malyn married W.G. Lankester in 1859 and they had three children Leonard W, Edith M, and Harold B Lankester. The Lankester family business was an iron foundry. The lease for this site - which is situated behind Holy Cross Church - was taken over in 1832. They also had a shop at 136 High Street Southampton. Alderman W.G. Lankester served on the committee of The Temperance Council as treasurer, and when he died in 1895, his widow Mary Malyn Lankester (c1830 – 1914) took over as Honorary Treasurer. Drink was perceived to be a big problem in the town. The claim of the temperance movement was “if it was not for intoxication, pauperism would be nearly extinguished in England, and crime of every kind would fall by a quarter of the present amount”.
(‘Familiar and Forgotten’ Illustrated Local Lives from Southampton’s Collections 2007).

In 1875 the ownership of the buildings passed to W G Lankester, (following the death of his father William Lankester on 22nd April 1875). He continued to rent it as three separate tenancies. Businesses such as dying, bookbinding, crockery selling, and ship designing all took place within these premises.
(Conveyance and Assignment 16th August 1875).

A Corporation lease was made to William Goddard Lankester for Three Arches in the Town Wall. To hold from Lady Day 1876 for 40 years at 19/- annual rent.
(Corporation Lease 10th August 1877 SC4/3/2092)

As public spirited men, the Lankesters may have bought and held the Tudor House property with an eye to its preservation, but rehabilitation and restoration had to wait the arrival in Southampton of W.F.G Spranger. (1848 – 1917), a discreet and practical philanthropist and a man of sensitivity, with the means to implement it.
(A.G.K. Leonard The Saving of Tudor House Published by Paul Cave 1987)p4..

The first Itchen Bridge Company was formed on 30 August 1833 when at a 'numerous and highly respectable public meeting' held at the Guildhall, Southampton, it was decided to raise a share capital of £30,000 for the purpose of building a swing bridge of seventeen arches across the River Itchen a few yards south of the ancient Crosshouse ferry (p.2).

Meanwhile under the leadership of William Lankester, local ironmonger and Radical, who had taken a vigorous and active part in the Company's affairs since its inauguration...(p.10)

By the Act of 1851 the Company's name was changed. (p.11).

The day-to-day affairs of the Company were put under the control of wLankester's son, William Goddard Lankester, as Manager and Accountant. (p.11).

(Crossing the Itchen B.C.Jones Southampton Papers Number One The Itchen Floating Bridge and Roads 1834 – 1934 Published by the City of Southampton).

'The Floating Bridge Company' - In 1833 The Itchen Bridge Company was established to build a stone bridge across the lower part of the River Itchen with approach roads from Southampton and Netley. Because of the opposition of the Admiralty a floating bridge or steam ferry working on chains was substituted. *(Southampton Records 1 p.47 – Guide to Records of the Corporation and Absorbed Authorities in the Civic Record Office. Published by. Southampton Corporation 1964. Minute Books 1833-1933 10 vols).*

The plan accompanying the 1886 conveyance of the Tudor House and Norman House property from W.G.Lankester to W.F.G.Spranger showed the latter leased to Mr. Beavis, for use as a coal yard, with a stable at the corner within Blue Anchor Lane and the medieval town wall – three arches, four buttresses and a gateway previously leased by the corporation for 19s a year to Lankester and renewed to Spranger for 40 years from March 1980.

William Beavis, tenant of the shell of the Norman House, was a partner and later principal in the firm of Haddon and Beavis, shipping agents and coal merchants. He is remembered for having given the corporation £10,000 in celebration of the Armistice in 1918, as a trust fund to provide annual treats for elementary school children (SRO TC Misc 17): Beavis Treat money now subsidises educational journeys for middle school pupils.

(A.G.K. Leonard The Saving of Tudor House Published by Paul Cave 1987)p11. A copy of Mr. Beavis letter to the Town Clerk outlining his bequest can be found on the main file – from "The Beavis Treat" S.C.Museum Oral History Section)

In 1972 following demolition in the area of Southampton High Street and close to Holyrood Church a Tudor building was discovered encased in walls of a later date. A photograph in the "Southern Evening Echo of Thursday Nov 2nd 1972 also shows the firm of Lankester Engineers and Factors . (A copy of this article is on the main file). *(Southampton City Council Oral History Department).*