

12/7/5/2

View from UF Church spire

Another popular view in days gone by was taken from the clock tower of the then Free Church, now the church hall. This view also appeared on postcards over the years.

It is a view which over the years has totally changed. The then pastoral scene of Alehousewells farm has disappeared with the development of the area for housing in the 1970's. The area in the middle distance in the picture consists of the river Don to the left and then the sweep of the Alehousewells fields with the farm buildings to the right. The farm buildings to the left behind the clump of trees are the barn which contained a mill powered by water from a dam, the surface of which can be seen glinting between the two sets of buildings. This view, is obliterated by the growth of trees on the Keshill beyond the hotel which in the picture is covered with broom. The farm of Alehousewells was at that time farmed by William Bremner who had previously come from Fetternear. It was he who designed the building containing the Bank and the chemist's shop. These were built in 1888 for the Petrie family who ran a general merchant's store and also held the bank agency. During alterations to the farmhouse at Alehousewells in the 1950's, plans of these buildings were found but, sadly, they have since been lost. The Petrie family started out in business on the site of the Burnett Arms Hotel with a small shop. The hotel was built, according to the date on the gable, in 1902, by James Henry whose monogram appears above the door leading to the public bar. This venture left him in somewhat straitened circumstances and he thereafter stayed in Birchfield. The Burnett Arms is a beautiful building which in its heyday was one of the more highly regarded hotels in the area catering for holiday visitors and fishers, having one of the beats on the Don for its own use.

Behind the hotel may be seen the roof of Don Cottage, for many years the home of the Snowie family who at one time ran a bakery in Station Road.

12/7/5/2

View from UF Church spire

The buildings in the picture are more or less the early development area of the village. The Post Office buildings were built on the site of the steading of the Mains of Kemnay, and the land of this holding stretched more or less to the quarry. The gable nearest the camera is that of Elythewood which was built on a double feu by the then chemist, Mr Panton, and in turn occupied by his successor, Mr Weir, and later by his widow until her death in 1959. Next is Kinnaird, which was long known as Rose Cottage. The Grange was built by the Diack family, one of the earliest families to settle in the village following the start of the quarry. They were responsible for several properties in the village. Peter built the Grange, his brother Alexander built Thorpeville. William Alexander, son of Alexander farmed in Pictillum, possibly building the present farmhouse and also Essie Cottage across the road. James Adam Diack, brother of Pictillum, was a tailor in the village and built the shop now occupied by R S McColl and also the house called Benview on top of Kendal Road. The house on the corner of Paradise Road, Roslyn, was originally the farmhouse of the Mains of Kemnay but has been extensively extended and renovated since then.

Paradise Road was the main thoroughfare in the early days following its present line up past Wellbank and on through what is now the brickyard at the quarry. Its line can be picked up again beyond the weighbridge as it heads towards Dalmadilly. It later split, one road going over the hill to Thainstone, the other carrying on to Inverurie, along the route of the present road to Haughton but carrying straight on along the face of the hill and eventually coming out beside the Bridge Bar in Port Elphinstone.