

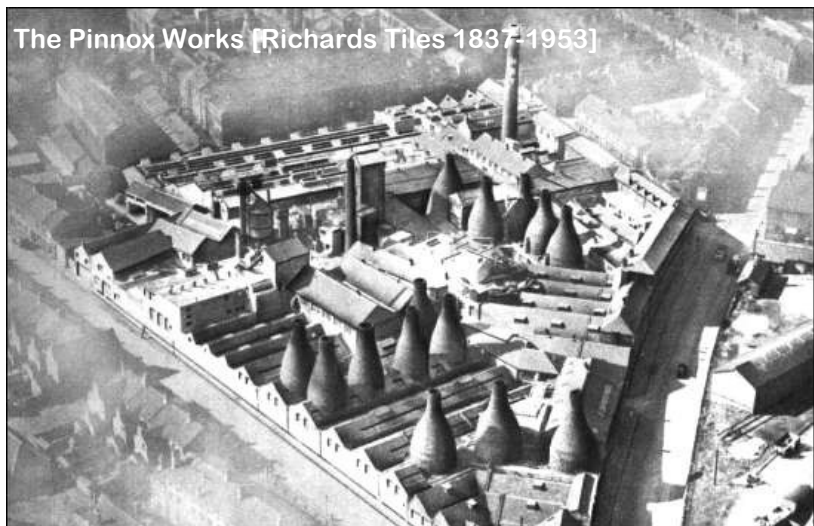
The Corn family



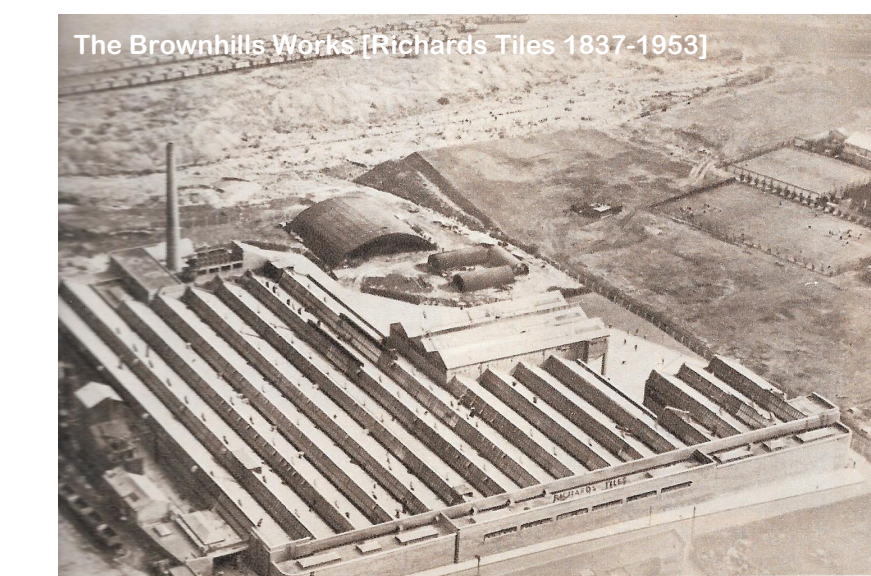
Alfred Corn about 1910 [family collection]

Alfred Corn was a member of Trentham Parish Council and attended Trentham church. He travelled widely and was keen on outdoor sports and a member of Trentham Golf Club. In 1902 he married Florence L'Anson from Saltburn, Yorkshire and they lived with their three daughters at Selwyn, a substantial house on the Longton Road, until his death in 1916. Edmund and his wife Nancy returned to Trentham to help Alfred's family, but his widow eventually took the children to live with her family in Saltburn.

Edmund lived at Selwyn until 1933 when he moved to Whittington Old Hall near Lichfield. In 1936 he placed the eight bed roomed house at the disposal of the Stoke on Trent Blind Welfare Committee in memory of the late King George V. It had accommodation for 12 blind people and became known as the King George V Memorial home. It closed around 1999 when the land was bought for development into a residential care facility, which was fittingly named Selwyn House.



The Pinnox Works [Richards Tiles 1837-1953]



The Brownhills Works [Richards Tiles 1837-1953]

Alfred Henry and Edmund Richards Corn were sons of Edward Corn, a pottery manufacturer. Alfred was born in 1866 and Edmund in 1870. Both brothers were educated at Newcastle School. When their father died in 1890 they inherited the family business, W & E Corn. In 1891 they began to manufacture glazed tiles which proved a successful venture and in 1899 the business changed its name to Henry Richards Tile Co. A younger brother Reginald Augustus Corn was less successful with his own ventures.

In 1900 Alfred and Edmund bought Edward Johns & Co manufacturers of sanitary ware in Armitage near Rugeley and this business was largely managed by Edmund. In 1903 W & E Corn moved premises to the old Pinnox works in Tunstall. Pottery manufacture ceased and they concentrated on tile production. In 1911 a new adjoining factory was built for the production of floor tiles.

Alfred died in 1916 aged 50 and Edmund took charge of the firm. It changed its name to Richards Tiles in 1931.

As well as making wall and floor tiles the firm manufactured mosaics, bathroom suites and fireplaces.

The firm was a progressive employer and one of the first in North Staffordshire to give its employees holiday pay. Benefits also included works canteen and locker rooms and showers.



Selwyn around 1904 [family collection]

Edmund Corn married [Susan Annie] Nancy Hammersley, also from a family of potters, in 1892. They had no children. He was a staunch churchman, a magistrate and Chief Bailiff of Tunstall. His chief recreations were hunting, shooting, and golf. He was also a director of Wolstanton Colliery. He had close links to the North Staffs Royal Infirmary. He was a member of the Hospital Management Board and chairman of the Building Committee and became its president in 1932. Between 1934 and 1936 he gave £7,700 to the hospital enabling an ophthalmic department with an operating theatre and private wards to be built.

Under Edmund's leadership Richards Tiles continued to prosper and in 1934 opened the Brownhills works in Tunstall with gas fired tunnel kilns.

He oversaw the education of his nephew Edward Reginald Geoffrey Corn, who would take over the management of the company when he retired.

In 1937 he presided over a huge garden party for all the company's employees to celebrate its centenary. He died in 1945 aged 75 and was buried in Whittington churchyard.



In July 1937 there was an enormous garden party at Whittington Old Hall for 1,500 of the company's employees.

The occasion was a celebration of the centenary of Richards Tiles Ltd. Mrs Nancy Corn is seen addressing the guests, with Mr Edmund Corn seated second from the right and Mr Edward Reginald Geoffrey Corn on the far right.



Geoffrey Corn [Richards Tiles 1837-1953]

Edward Reginald Geoffrey Corn was born in 1899 in Cobridge, the son of Reginald Corn and nephew of Alfred and Edmund. He left Newcastle High School when he was 13 and was given the position of water closets' over-looker at the factory at Armitage. In 1914 he was sent to Repton Public School by his Uncle Edmund. There he developed a passion for cricket which carried into his adult life.

He joined the family firm and was in a position to take over when his Uncle retired in the 1930s. He continued to introduce employee friendly policies, which included a profit sharing scheme. He developed a purpose built factory at Adderley Green in 1958.

For recreation he played cricket and loved walking and would lead company rambles. He was active in the life of Trentham Church and was a church warden for more than 25 years.

He lived with his wife Margaret and family at Meriden on Barlaston Old Road. He was awarded the CBE in 1962. He died in 1987 aged 88.



Meriden on Barlaston Old Road home of Geoffrey Corn - [private collection]