

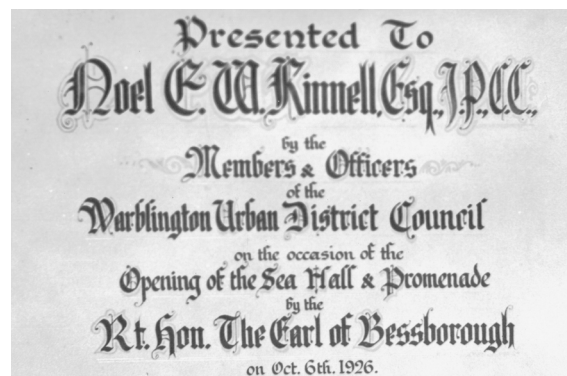
Noel Kinnell – “Mr Emsworth”

by Bob Smyth

He was Emsworth’s biggest benefactor, and served almost a lifetime on the town’s fledgling council which provided the municipal buildings still active today – the fire station and Museum. Owner of the town brewery, whose chimney stack towered over what is today the South Street car park, Noel Kinnell was founding president in 1921 of the Slipper Sailing Club – now the ESSC occupying the former Town Mill. In his final years he bequeathed funds to build the sea wall Promenade.

Yet surprisingly little is known about him, and his only memorial is the plaque in the Promenade wall opposite the ESSC. It reads: *This tablet records the gratitude of the inhabitants of Emsworth to Noel E W*

Kinnell, Esq, JP, CC, of Seafield Emsworth for his public spirited generosity in defraying the whole of the expense of the erection of this seawall & promenade after the purchase of the Mill Pond in 1925 by the Warblington Urban District Council of which he was for 25 years a member & for 6 years chairman.



Noel Kinnell – “Mr Emsworth” continued

His father Thomas Kinnell was Scottish (b1805), recorded as marrying wife Ada (b1838) in Torquay in 1862 – Thomas then being 57. Their son Noel was in his thirties in the 1890s when he served on the new Warblington UDC (established 1895 and named after the parish covering Emsworth). In 1900 the UDC built the North Street municipal offices, with the Post Office following in 1905.

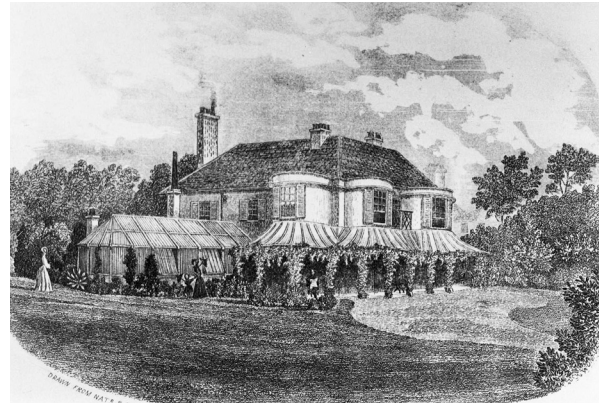
The Kinnell and Hartley brewery owned several public houses, including the Coal Exchange and Town Brewery. Kinnell lived in Seafield, the mansion on the west side of the Mill Pond with land stretching down to the Seafields shore. The estate included a farm and its former dairy, now fronted by Fiscal House. The former Coach House is now the Envisage dental clinic.

An ESSC history records that, “In 1924 he paid for the sea wall, which up till then was a gravel path with rocks on each side, to be constructed in concrete with a tarmac footpath, much as it is today. He also deposited £800 in a local bank to be used in maintenance of the sea wall.”

Noel Kinnell died at Seafield in 1927, his death certificate recording cause of death as “broncho pneumonia, gastritis {and} chronic alcoholism”.



Noel Kinnell, seated centre, with fellow members of Warblington Urban District Council



19th century engraving by William Pink of Seafield Lodge

The cul-de-sac developed in the seven-acre Seafield back garden in the 1970s is named after him. The garden was until postwar years the venue for the annual fete, today the Emsworth Horticultural Show.

Making deliveries in the early years of the 20th century with the Kinnell & Hartley brewery traction engine

