

## The STOKER family

### Introduction

I have been corresponding with Jill KEENE, Robin EDWARDS, Ken STOKER and Martin RUFFELL regarding the Stoker family history.

Dorothy BROWN's father Hartley BROWN had an older brother Charles, and I am his grandson living in Chelmsford, Essex. My cousin Trevor helped clear Dorothy's house when she went into the care home, and he mentioned that there were many photographs. As I have researched the BROWN family history (among others) extensively I wanted to see if there were more BROWN photo's I could add to my collection. There were more than a few, but sprinkled among them were many STOKERs from Hilda's side of the family. So my task was to separate the Browns from the Stokers. To this end I got in touch with Jill KEENE (granddaughter of Sidney STOKER ) and then Robin EDWARDS and Martin RUFFELL (both grandsons of Annie STOKER) and Ken STOKER (son of Alfred STOKER) to help identify the individuals in photos where they could, and with my background in family history, I have used public records to help work out who was who and date known events.

After further correspondence with Brian Jay and Tony Millatt and looking through other STOKER information at the Mersea Museum, I have tried to document all the STOKER material found, starting with William John STOKER (1859). Apologies for any errors or omissions.

I have added a section at the end about the two main residences of William John STOKER's family at West Mersea, namely Riverside House and the Old Victory. Margaret GRAHAM and family have very kindly allowed us (Andy BROWN, Bran JAY and Don RAINBIRD) to view the many deeds and documents related to Riverside House and this has helped clear up details of who lived there and ties in well with the other family connections with William SALES from Streatham; he was instrumental in helping the STOKER family acquire Riverside House, and who eventually bequeathed the property to Grace STOKER in 1920.

Please contact me [andy.c.brown@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:andy.c.brown@blueyonder.co.uk) if you have any comments or additional information.

Andy Brown

### **Descendants of William STOKER (1833), son of John STOKER (1808-1890):**

#### 1. William John (1859-1934)

##### 1.1 Martha Annie STOKER (1885-1970)

###### 1.1.1 Ena Annie STOKER (1907-1996)

###### 1.1.1.1 Robin Anthony EDWARDS (1939)

###### 1.1.1.2 Alan Walton EDWARDS (1940)

###### 1.1.2 Henry RUFFELL (1913)

###### 1.1.2.1 Carol Anne RUFFELL (1939)

###### 1.1.2.2 Marion Jill RUFFELL (1946)

###### 1.1.2.3 Martin RUFFELL (1960)

- 1.2 Leonard W. STOKER (1887-1926)
- 1.3 Alfred STOKER (1891-1951)
  - 1.3.1 Eric A STOKER (1913-1977)
  - 1.3.2 Kenneth M J STOKER (1926)
- 1.4 Sidney STOKER (1893-1969)
  - 1.4.1 Ernest STOKER (1918-1918)
  - 1.4.2 Joyce Barbara STOKER (1920-2001)
    - 1.4.2.1 Wendy Carol KEENE (1943)
    - 1.4.2.2 Barry Richard KEENE (1947-2016)
    - 1.4.2.3 Jillian S KEENE (1959)
- 1.5 Grace Evelyn STOKER (1896-1951)
- 1.6 Hilda STOKER (1899-1957)
  - 1.6.1 Eileen P BROWN (1928-1997)
  - 1.6.2 Dorothy Hilda (1932-2018)
- 1.7 Vera Kate STOKER (1905-2002)
  - 1.7.1 Leonard F DERHAM (1927)
2. Sarah Ann STOKER (1861) m. 11 Oct 1888 Ipey John Aldridge (1866)
3. Sarah (1864)
4. Susannah STOKER (c1866)
5. George STOKER (c1869) m. 24 May 1890 Alice Maria Inward (c1869)
  - 5.1 George James STOKER (c1891) m. 19 Jul 1917 Constance May Salmon
  - 5.2 Horace STOKER (c1894)
  - 5.3 Robert Herbert STOKER b c1910 M 9 Jul 1933 Eleanor Winnie Geddes
    - 5.3.1 Marion Eleanor Alice STOKER (c1936) m. 21 Jan 1956 Clive Edward Maynard Young (c1935)
    - 5.3.2 David Robert STOKER (c1938) m. 20 July 1963 Diana Beatrice Slater
      - 4.3.2.1. Mandy Jane STOKER (c1964) m. 1 Nov 1986 Mark James Blowers (c1963)
    - 5.3.3 Sandra Eileen STOKER (c1943) m. 16 Jan 1965 James Richard French
6. Thomas STOKER (c1872) m. 8 Jan 1897 Linda Elizabeth Ellen Woodhouse, m 8 Oct 1938 Asinath Fann.
  - 6.1 Harold Frederick STOKER (1898-1918) RFA INDUSTRY.
7. Charles H. STOKER (c1875) m. 21 Oct 1899 Ada Appleton (c1877)
8. Arthur STOKER (c1878)
9. May Mary STOKER (c1882) m 4 Aug 1909 Henry John Inward (c1878)



**John STOKER (c1780)**

1804: **William John STOKER's** great grandfather, **John Stoker** married Mary WOODS at Steeple, Essex

1805: John STOKER was a Tailor; he is listed as a master of an apprentice Samuel Cracklin at Steeple, Essex.

**John STOKER (1808-1890)**

1808: **William John STOKER's** grandfather, **John Stoker** was born 1808 and baptized at Bradwell-on-Sea in 1809; John's parents were named as John and Mary. They lived at Steeple, Essex on the south bank of the River Blackwater.

1830: **John Stoker** married Mary Rebecca PARR 1<sup>st</sup> March 1830 at Burnham Overy. Mary was born in Wells, Norfolk: so perhaps it was she who lured John from Essex to Norfolk.

Children:

- |                          |                      |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. <b>William</b> (1833) | Happisburgh, Norfolk |
| 2. Maria (1838)          | West Mersea          |
| 3. Thomas D (1846)       | West Mersea          |
| 4. Susanna (1849)        | West Mersea          |

c1836: They moved from Happisburgh, Norfolk to Mersea between 1834 and 1838 when Maria was born.

1841: Mersea Street, West Mersea: **John STOKER** (Navy, 33), Mary R (32), William STOKER (8), Mary (3), Maria (1 month).

1851: Village, West Mersea: **John STOKER** (Fisherman, 43), Mary R (42), William STOKER (Fisherman, 18), Maria (9), Thomas D (5), Susanna (2).

1861: West Mersea: **John STOKER** (Fisherman, 53), Mary R (52), Maria (19), Thomas D (15), Susanna (12).

1871: The Lane, North, West Mersea: **John STOKER** (Fisherman, 63), Maria RAYMOND (29), William RAYMOND (24), Susanna (Granddaughter, 0).

1881: West Mersea: **John STOKER** (Fisherman, 73), Mary (72), Thomas D (36).

1885: Mary Rebecca STOKER died at West Mersea 31<sup>st</sup> March 1885 age 76.

1890: **John STOKER** died at West Mersea 4<sup>th</sup> June 1890 age 82.

**William STOKER (1833-1903)**

1833: William John STOKER's father **William Stoker** was born 1833 at Happisburgh, Norfolk.

c1836: Probably moved from Happisburgh, Norfolk to Mersea before Maria was born in 1838.

1851: West Mersea: John STOKER (Fisherman, 43), Mary R (42), **William STOKER** (Fisherman, 18), Maria (9), Thomas D (5), Susanna (2).

1858: **William STOKER** married Sarah SHARP (1837) on 11<sup>th</sup> June 1858, at Lexden.

Children:

1. **William John** (Jan 1859-1934) West Mersea
2. Sarah Ann (1861) ;
3. Sarah (1864) ;
4. Susannah (1866) ;
5. George (2<sup>nd</sup> Feb 1869-1953) ;
6. Thomas (Jan 1872-1959) ;
7. Charles Henry (July 1874 - 1952) ;
8. Arthur (July 1877 - 1950) ;
9. May Mary (April 1881 - 1953) ;

1861: West Mersea: **William STOKER** (Fisherman, 28), Sarah [SHARP] (24), William J (2), Sarah Ann (0).

1871: The Lane, North, West Mersea: **William STOKER** (Fisherman, 38), Sarah [SHARP] (34), William John (12), Sarah Ann (10), Sarah (7), Susannah (5), George (2).

1881: West Mersea: **William STOKER** (Fisherman, 48), Sarah [SHARP] (44), William John (Fisherman, 22), Susanna (14), George (12), Thomas (9), Charles (6), Arthur (3)

1901: West Mersea: **William STOKER** (Fisherman, 68), Sarah [SHARP] (64), Arthur (Fisherman, 23)

1903: **William Stoker** died age 70.

1910: Sarah STOKER died age 72.

### 1. William John STOKER (1859-1934)

- 1859: **William John Stoker** was born Jan 1859 at West Mersea.
- 1861: West Mersea: William STOKER (Fisherman, 28), Sarah [SHARP] (24), **William J STOKER** (2), Sarah Ann (0).
- 1871: The Lane, North, West Mersea: William STOKER (Fisherman, 38), Sarah [SHARP] (34), **William John STOKER** (12), Sarah Ann (10), Sarah (7), Susannah (5), George (2).
- 1871: The Lane, South, West Mersea, Keturah French (42, sweet shop), James (15), Ernest (10), **Martha** (9), William French (6)
- 1881: West Mersea: William STOKER (Fisherman, 48), Sarah [SHARP] (44), **William John STOKER** (Fisherman, 22), Susanna (14), George (12), Thomas (9), Charles (6), Arthur (3).
- 1881: **Martha FRENCH** (18) is working at 4, Orchard Street, Marylebone, London as a Housemaid for a Henry A Stevens (Solicitor, 40) and his family.



Martha Anne FRENCH (1862-1933)

- 1884: William John STOKER married Martha Anne FRENCH on 9<sup>th</sup> Aug 1884 at Lexden.

#### Children:

- |                           |             |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| 1. (Martha) Annie (1885)  | West Mersea |
| 2. Leonard William (1887) | ;           |
| 3. Alfred (1892)          | ;           |
| 4. Sidney (1894)          | ;           |
| 5. Grace Evelyn (1896)    | ;           |
| 6. Hilda (1899)           | ;           |
| 7. Vera Kate (1905)       | ;           |

1891: Shop next to Yew Tree House, West Mersea: Eliza Amos (widow, shop keeper, 86), Eliza Amos (daughter, dress maker, 56), **William STOKER** (Lodger, Mariner, 32), Martha (28), Anna (6), Leonard (4)

1901: Rainbow Field, Village, West Mersea: **William John STOKER** (Mariner, 43), Martha A (38), Leonard W (Fisherman, 14), Alfred (9), Sidney (7), Grace E (5), Hilda (1)



c1910 Riverside House

Alfred (18), Hilda(11), Vera (5), William (51), Annie (25), Martha (48), Leonard (23), Grace (14), Sidney (16)

1911: West Mersea, Riverside House; **William John STOKER** (fisherman,52) and Martha Anne (47), Leonard William (24, fisherman), Sidney (17, apprentice carpenter), Hilda (11), Vera (6)

Electoral Register:

1921-22: Riverside House: **William John STOKER** , Martha Anne

1923-29: Riverside House: **William John STOKER** , Martha Anne, Arthur STOKER (William's younger brother b.1878)

1930: Riverside House: **William John STOKER** , Martha Anne

1934: **William John STOKER** died 27th Dec 1934 aged 75.

1935: Martha Anne died 31s Dec 1935 at Royal Infirmary Edinburgh ("usual address Riverside") aged 73.

Alfred STOKER present, The Gables, Lower Road, River, Dover.



1. William John STOKER (fisherman) and Martha Anne FRENCH



Riverside House (from West Mersea Museum website) later 118 Coast Road.

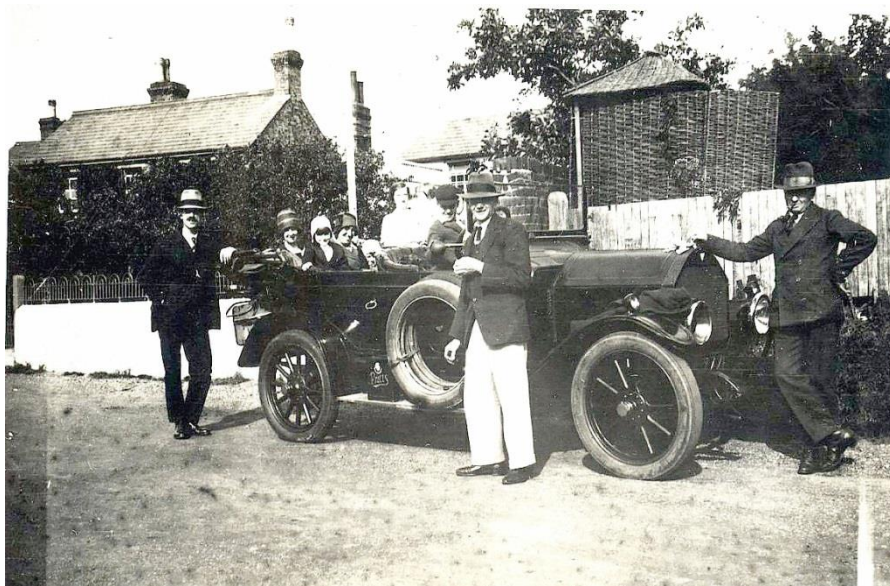
Lady on left is Martha STOKER, the girl standing is daughter Grace STOKER, others are unknown visitors



William STOKER and daughter Vera at Riverside House



Riverside House



Unknown visitors to Riverside (image from Don RAINBIRD) – could be Hilda holding Dorothy at back, which would date the photo to 1932



Martha & grandchild?



1922 Martha (59) & grandchild Eric STOKER (3)



1932 Martha(68) and Dorothy BROWN(0)



William STOKER



William STOKER

On the smack "Unexpected" he crewed with Charles Pullen.

Robin's notes:

*Old Billy Stoker seems a reasonable, sea-going, type. However, when Mum [Ena] was reminiscing while recovering from her heart attack she said he was very unpopular with just about everybody and consequently was found a job looking after what is now known as the "Company Shed". This is out in the estuary, permanently surrounded by water, and is built on a stilt-like structure. Its main function would, I suppose, have been to store the gear the oyster men needed to tend to the oyster beds. But Billy was made night watchman there and had to sleep (or maybe stay awake all night!) in the shed and that got him out of the way, to everyone else's evident satisfaction. Dorothy came up with another story about Billy, presumably when he was a bit younger. He had been out fishing in his boat (I think at night) but hadn't caught enough to justify the trip & signalled to his wife to row out to the boat to re-victual him. All she had to hand she put in a basket & rowed off to do as she had been bid. But when Billy found all he had been given was a bowl of cold rice pudding he was, understandably in my book, not best pleased.*



Grace - Hilda - Vera STOKER



Grace - Hilda - Ethel FARTHING - Martha



Vera Kate - Annie (Martha)  
Grace - Hilda



Grace and Annie



c1913: Len STOKER (26), Peter OWEN, Grace STOKER (17), Sid STOKER(19), Alf STOKER (21)

### 1.1 (Martha) Annie STOKER (1885-1970)

1885: **(Martha) Annie STOKER**, the eldest daughter of William John STOKER, was born 1885 at West Mersea.

1891: Shop next to Yew Tree House, West Mersea: Eliza Amos (widow, shop keeper, 86), Eliza Amos (daughter, dress maker, 56), William STOKER (Lodger, Mariner, 32), Martha (28), **Anna** (6), Leonard (4).

1901: **Annie** (16) was a cook at 21, Hilgrove Road, Hampstead, the household comprised:

William C FOOKS (60, Law Barrister), Isabel A FOOKS (daughter, 28, single), Beatrice C FOOKS (daughter, 21, single), Stephen Cracroft FOOKS (son, 20, single, Law Student)

Grace FRENCH (servant, 17, single, Housemaid) from West Mersea

**Annie** STOKER (servant, 16, single, Cook Domestic) from West Mersea

(these last two are cousins (see below) Grace (Minnie) French's father James, is Martha's brother)

The FRENCH connection:

**Grace Minnie French** born Lexden 1883

1891: **James French** (35, Fisherman), Bertha French(35), James (12, Fisher Boy), Bessie French (10), **Minnie French** (7), Sales (5), Keturah (3), Eva French (0)

1881: **James French** (25, Fisherman), Bertha French(25), Agnes (4), James (2), Bessie (0)

1871: The Lane, South, West Mersea, **Keturah French** (42, sweet shop), **James French**( 15), Ernest (10), **Martha** French (9), William French (6)

1861: James French (33, Mariner), A (wife,33), Mary Ann (8), **James French** (5), **Alice French** (3), Ernest (0)

1853: James FRENCH married Keturah Ann PULLEN

So Grace (Minnie) French's father James, is Martha's brother – i.e. Grace French and Annie STOKER are cousins.

1901: Edith M RUFFELL (William Ruffell's first wife, café manageress, 42) b 1859 Streatham, was visiting her uncle William SALES (House Agent, 65) Melrose, Thrale Road, Streatham; wife Elizabeth SALES (65), was from West Mersea; Alice Martha FRENCH (niece, assistant, 42) was also from West Mersea and Percy E ROBERTS (single, Clerk, 27) was from Leyton Essex [and Dorothy once told Robin he was Ena's father].

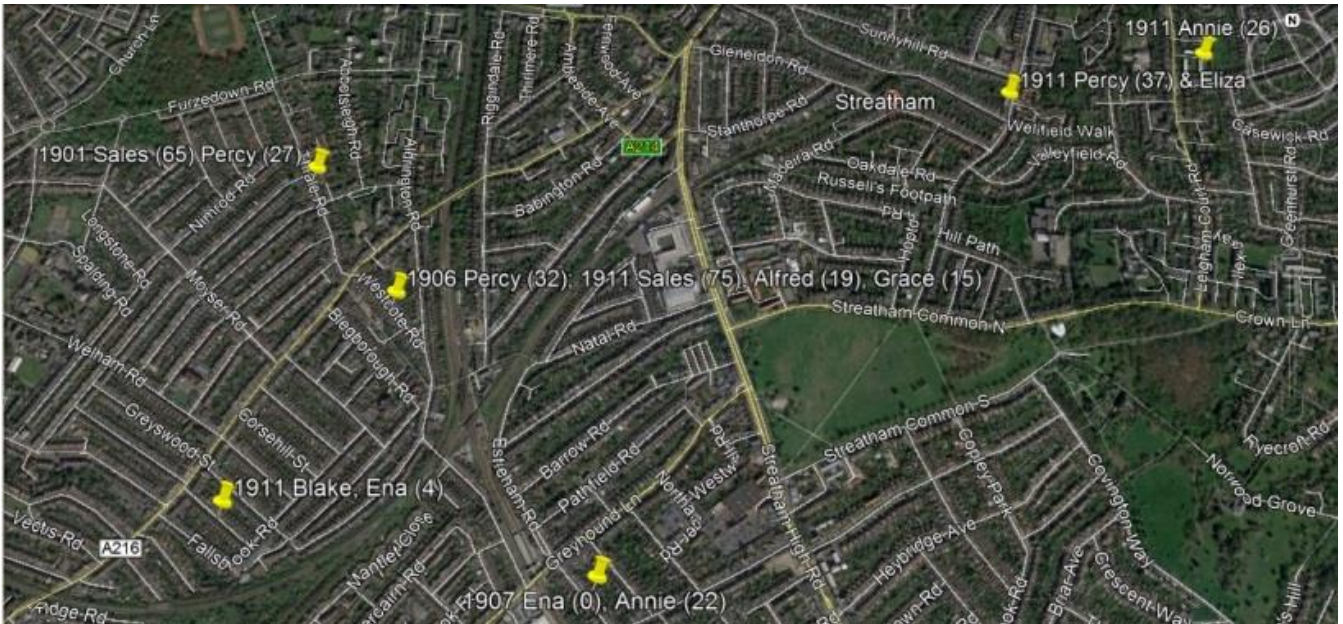
Edith RUFFELL's maiden name was SALES. Her father was James, brother of William.

Elizabeth SALES' maiden name was PULLEN (see below):

1871: William SALES (35) Bedford Row, Streatham; Wife Elizabeth SALES (35), from West Mersea; Alice Martha FRENCH (niece, 12) from West Mersea [Alice is Martha FRENCH's older



1911: At this time William A Ruffell was married to Edith Mary Sales (for 34 years) and had an adopted son Reginald (18) at Granton Lodge, Granton Road Leith Scotland.



Streets of Streatham with known location/dates

1912: Edith Mary RUFFELL died September 10<sup>th</sup> age 54 at Coliston Scotland. She was a caterer, married to William Anthony RUFFELL General Merchant. Her usual residence was Granton Lodge Edinburgh. Father James SALES (leather merchant deceased), Mother Sarah SALES (deceased).

1913: Henry Alfred RUFFELL (1913–1984) was born Jul 1913, Surrey (mother's name is STOKER). He married Margaret A Duffield in 1938 at Brighton. He had a daughters Carol Anne born 20<sup>th</sup> Feb 1939 and Marion Jill Ruffell born 7<sup>th</sup> Aug 1946 and a son Martin born 13<sup>th</sup> March 1960. Henry died in Bendigo, Australia on 13<sup>th</sup> Jan 1984.



Martha Annie STOKER (about 1910?) posted by Robin EDWARDS on Ancestry

Robin's notes: *My understanding is that Uncle Alf, who was at the time a policeman, made it his business to look out Ena in London & not liking what he found at Mrs B's he brought Ena back to Nana [Martha] at West Mersea & told Nana [Martha] she was her responsibility & she should get on with it. Mum was thereafter brought up as part of the Stoker family living in the family house, Riverside, a clap-board house typical of the Island, right down on "The Hard" (as the foreshore of the River Blackwater is known). The house still stands and is of quite an impressive size. (Doff assures me it was never owned by the Stokers - they leased it.) Mum was always very fond of Mersea and its famous "native" oysters.*



1914:

Ena aged 7 (1914)



Annie STOKER (Morrison's Studio 137 Leith Street, Edinburgh operated from 1915-36).

1915:

William Anthony Ruffell is Tenant Occupier of House 11, Leopold Place, Edinburgh

William Anthony Ruffell is Tenant Occupier of Motor Car Windsor Street Lane, Edinburgh

William Anthony Ruffell is Proprietor House No. 3 Bruntsfield Terr, Edinburgh

William Anthony Ruffell is Tenant Occupier of Shop No. 8A West Maitland Street

William Anthony Ruffell is Tenant Occupier of Shop No. 3 Lindsay Place

1916: Martha Annie STOKER (30) married William Anthony Ruffell (58, widower, Hotel Proprietor) at St Andrews (at 24, York Place, Edinburgh) 12.7.1916. Both living at Leopold Place Edinburgh.

Robin's notes: *When Nana [Martha] (who incidentally once bit Alan) married William A Ruffell (to whom, as a trained Cordon Bleu cook, she was previously housekeeper) he "took in" Mum [Ena]. She was told to address him as "Uncle" and, for the sake of logic and appearances, she had to address Nana [Martha] as "Aunty" which she continued to do to Nana's dying day (& even after). I can't remember when I [Robin] was first told Nana [Martha] was in fact Ena's mother but it was not until I was well along in adulthood. It was a crying shame that Mum [Ena]'s upbringing was such that SHE was made to feel ashamed of her origins. Despite all that she delighted in her Mersea relatives and they adored her.*



William RUFFELL (Ena's "Uncle") and Annie (aka "Aunty")

1918: William A Ruffell is Proprietor Occupier of Hotel Belle Vue Dunbar (1913 -1918). Home address on the 1918 entry is 12, Duddingston Crescent, Portobello (now Aynetree Guest House).



Henry RUFFELL and Annie



Martha, Henry and Ena



Henry RUFFELL at "Fountain Abbey" dated "29<sup>th</sup> June 1930"

1935: William RUFFELL (b. 1856) died 22<sup>nd</sup> Sept 1935 – he was living at 28 Durham Square Portobello. He previously married Edith Mary SALES at Lambeth in Q3 1877.



Ena at Mersea at Ray Island posted on Ancestry



Ena STOKER



Henry RUFFELL and Eileen BROWN



Henry Alfred RUFFELL  
Edinburgh photographer

Based on notes from Martin RUFFELL:

*Henry was educated at the University of Edinburgh and married Margaret A Duffield in 1938 at Brighton. They emigrated to Australia in 1948 and bought a house with an orchard on the outskirts of Sydney. Then a job offer had them move to Melbourne where he worked for the Dept. Of Defence where he was responsible for arranging contracts between the government and the oil industry. He was awarded an MBE for services to the industry in 1974 and retired 1976 but worked occasionally as a government inspector of refineries. He was a mathematician and industrial chemist and loved nothing more than spending weekends doing calculus and working on a formulae related to oil viscosity which was not published. Later in retirement he took up silver smithing then after Margaret died he moved up to Bendigo where he continued to make jewellery at the local lapidary club; all to do with Martin's influence from when he started his jeweller's apprenticeship in 1976. Henry died of lung cancer in 1986.*



Henry RUFFELL



Margaret A DUFFIELD



Margaret and Henry RUFFELL



1960: Margaret, Henry (47), Martin (9 months), Marion (14) and Carol (21) at Melbourne



Ena at Mersea posted on Ancestry



1936: Ena Annie STOKER married Alfred Walton EDWARDS 1936 St Andrews (Edinburgh)



Ena and Fred

Margaret (Henry's wife) and Ena

at the Twelve Apostles, Portobello

(posted on Ancestry, and from Martin RUFFELL)

Children:

1. Robin Anthony EDWARDS (7<sup>th</sup> April 1939) Leith, Scotland.
2. Alan Walton EDWARDS (1940) Leith, Scotland.



Robin Anthony EDWARDS aged 6 weeks (May 1939)



1939

Ena-Robin at The Old Vic, West Mersea posted on Ancestry:



Christmas 1939 Robin EDWARDS (8 months)



1941: Alan and Robin EDWARDS (2)



1928: Ena (21) – Hilda STOKER(29)  
Leonard DERHAM (1) - Eileen BROWN (0)



1931: Leonard DERHAM (4) - Ena (24)  
- Eileen BROWN (3)



Grace STOKER – Ena STOKER



1942:

Alan(2) & Robin(3) (“To G.Dad & G. Ma”) ; (“To Aunt Hilda”)



Christmas 1942 Alan EDWARDS – Carol Anne RUFFELL (cousin born 20<sup>th</sup> Feb 1939)- Robin EDWARDS



Ena



Fred - Robin - Ena - Alan EDWARDS



Alan(3) & Robin(4) EDWARDS "August 1943 – To Auntie Grace" ; Robin, Alan and Carol Anne Ruffell



Ena Dorothy Robin Alan



Dorothy – Hilda – Hartley – Alan – Charles & Emily BROWN – Robin



Eileen – Hartley – Alan – Robin – Hilda – Dorothy – Fred



Annie – Eileen – Hilda – Alan – Robin – Ena - Dorothy



Annie – Ena – Alan – Robin - Fred



Fred - ? – Dorothy  
Annie – Ena – Hilda  
Alan – Robin



Hilda – Fred – Dorothy - ? ? ? – Alan – Robin



Robin - Alan - Fred EDWARDS



Fred – Ena – Dorothy



Eileen – Ena – Fred – Hartley



Hartley - Ena – Gwen (Alfred STOKER's wife) - Eileen – Fred



Florence (Len STOKER's wife), Ena, Fred, Eileen



Robin EDWARDS's wedding (1965) to "Sandra" (Elizabeth Alexandra) MCKAY at George Square Edinburgh.

David Marcus (best man), Robin(26), Sandra, Ena (Sandra's eldest sister), Alan (24)

Annie (80), Ena (58), Fred(58), Fiona(Alan's wife) seated.



Robin and Elizabeth EDWARDS (1965)



Ena STOKER



Ena (59) and Fred (Milan 1966)

1970: Annie RUFFELL died 1970 in Edinburgh age 85

1971: Alfred EDWARDS died 1971 in Edinburgh age 64

1996: Ena Annie EDWARDS died in Edinburgh age 89

## 1.2 Leonard William STOKER (1887-1926)

1887: **Leonard William STOKER** was born 1887 at West Mersea.

1891: Shop next to Yew Tree House, West Mersea: Eliza Amos (widow, shop keeper, 86), Eliza Amos (daughter, dress maker, 56), William STOKER (Lodger, Mariner, 32), Martha (28), Anna (6), **Leonard** (4).

1891: Florence Louise BIANCHI was born 21st March 1891 at Frimley, Farnham, Surrey. Father William Joseph BIANCHI (Military staff clerke), mother Ellen Louisa BIANCHI (nee SHIPTON).

1891: Census Aldershot: William Joseph BIANCHI (soldier, 33) born in Lancashire, Ellen Louisa (wife, 33), William James (9), Edith Ellen (7), Sidney Lewis (5), Charles (3), Frederick (2), Martha (less than one month – [this would correspond to Florence]).

1895: Florence's father William Joseph BIANCHI died in Cairo, Egypt aged 37.

1898: Florence's mother Ellen Louisa died at Billericay aged 40.

1901: Rainbow Field, Village, West Mersea: William John STOKER (Mariner, 43), Martha A (38), **Leonard W** (Fisherman, 14), Alfred (9), Sidney (7), Grace E (5), Hilda (1)

1901: Devonport, Stoke Damerel, Devon: Florence BIANCHI Scholar (10), from Egypt.



c1910: Oyster men: Zebedee MILGATE, **Len STOKER** and John MILGATE at the back of the Victory

1911: Riverside House with parents William John STOKER (fisherman,52) and Martha Anne (47 ),  
**Leonard William** (24, fisherman), Sidney (17, apprentice carpenter), Hilda (11), Vera (6).

1911: Redbourne Priest Lane Shenfield, Florence Louisa Bianchi (single, Cook, 20) Resident of Cairo  
Egypt.

1914: The Yachtsman 25 June 1914



Bert Hews, Snowball Heck Pinky Hewes, Heck STOKER, Len STOKER (27)



Smack MAJESTIC CK59. Zeb MILGATE, Len STOKER, John MILGATE



1916: Leonard William STOKER (30) married Florence Louisa BIANCHI (25) Nov 4<sup>th</sup> 1916

The wedding took place at the Parish Church, West Mersea. Picture was taken outside Riverside

Back: Hartley BROWN, Grace HARDY, Sid HEWES, Florence BIANCHI, Len, Alf and William STOKER.

Seated : Mrs HEWES, Grace STOKER, Hilda STOKER (married Hartley BROWN), Annie HEWES.

On the marriage certificate, Florence came from Shenfield. The witnesses were Alfred STOKER (brother), William John STOKER (father) and George Everly STOKER (uncle). Bride's father was William John [Joseph] Bianchi (Sergeant Major A.S. deceased). Born in Liverpool, William Joseph BIANCHI married Ellen Louisa Shipton at Billericay in 1881. He was in the British armed forces overseas and died in Cairo Egypt in 1895 aged 37. Florence's mother Ellen Louisa BIANCHI died at Billericay in 1898 aged 40.

Florence's brother Frederick was born 18<sup>th</sup> April 1889 in Ireland, attended Great Burstead (Boys) Boarding School from Jan 1898 (age 9) to July 1902 (age 13) (from headmaster's reference letter) and joined the Army Service Corp at 44<sup>th</sup> Regimental District Warley on 5<sup>th</sup> May 1903 aged 14 (no. 20965) where he trained as a Tailor. At this time he was 5'1" and 80 pound (less than 6 stone). He transferred to Police Barrack, West Hill, Winchester. As a Driver (25) he was mobilized at Aldershot 5<sup>th</sup> August 1914 (he had grown to 5'11") and received the 1914/15 Star (British Expeditionary Force to France). On his service record his next of kin are listed as brother William Jas BIANCHI Hackney School Brentwood, Ellen BIANCHI (c/o Mrs Earthy, Queens Road, Brentwood), Florence BIANCHI (soldiers daughters home Devonport), Sydney BIANCHI (Rifle Brigade, Portsmouth), Charles BIANCHI (Army Service Corp, Aldershot). He was demobed on 14<sup>th</sup> Feb 1919 at Woolwich Dockyard (home address 6 Alexander Road Brentwood). At age 27 he

married Alice Maud Borrett at Shenfield Parish church on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1917. In 1920 he was living at Basingstoke. They had three children: Frederick Joseph (3<sup>rd</sup> May 1920), Sidney Charles (May 1921) and Ellen Phyllis (1923). In 1939 Frederick (50) was a Police Constable at 3 Madeira Court , Bournemouth. He died at Bournemouth in 1966 aged 77.



from Ancestry son of Frederick (1889): Frederick Joseph BIANCHI Revd  
(2<sup>nd</sup> May 1920 Andover –Southampton May 1989)

Hampshire Telegraph 11 December 1942

**LAND ARMY BRIDE**  
Much interest was shown in the marriage, at St. Peter's Church, Bishop's Waltham, between Police Constable Frederick Bianchi, youngest son of Mr. F. Bianchi and the late Mrs. Bianchi, of 44, Granville Road, Boscombe, and Miss Ada Savage, Women's Land Army, only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Savage, of the Preshaw Estate, near Bishop's Waltham. The ceremony was performed by the Rector of Bishop's Waltham (the Rev. N. H. Stubbs, M.A.), and Mr. C. Haydn Bull was at the organ. The bride, who was given away by her father, wore a white satin dress, with veil and wreath of orange blossom, and carried a bouquet of red carnations relieved with fern. She was attended by Corporal E. P. Bianchi, W.A.A.F. (sister of the bridegroom), and Sergt. M. Miller, A.T.S., both of whom were in their Service uniform. P.S. Eric Thorne, of the H.C.C. Head-quarters staff, was the best man. A reception was held at the home of the bride's parents, and the newly-wedded pair afterwards left for their honeymoon at Bournemouth. The wedding cake was ornamented with the badges of the Women's Land Army and the Hampshire County Constabulary. There were many useful presents, which included a gift from the members of the Women's Land Army on the Preshaw Estate.

Frederick and Ada had two children:

Janice Elizabeth BIANCHI (Droxford Dec 1943 – Andover 2012)

Jose L BIANCHI (Winchester 1947 - )



Nephew Frederick Joseph BIANCHI (1920) with Florence STOKER (nee BIANCHI) outside Old Victory



1921: Electoral Register, Old Victory: **Leonard** and Sidney STOKER



Leonard William STOKER

1926: Len died 9<sup>th</sup> Nov 1926 age 39

Florence lived in half of the Old Vic immediately through the wall from that part of the original building where Jill KEENE lives.



Florence STOKER, Ena & Fred EDWARDS, Eileen BROWN

1931, 1936, 1945, 1955, 1973: Electoral register: Old Vic Florence Louisa (142, coast road).

1982: Florence died 5<sup>th</sup> Jan 1982 age 91

### 1.3 Alfred STOKER (1891-1951)

1891: **Alfred STOKER** born 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1891 at West Mersea.

1891: Grace Maud HARDY was born 24<sup>th</sup> July 1891.

1901: Rainbow Field, Village, West Mersea: William John STOKER (Mariner, 43), Martha A (38), Leonard W (Fisherman, 14), **Alfred** (9), Sidney (7), Grace E (5), Hilda (1).

1901: The Square, Village, West Mersea: John HARDY (Oysterman,56), Caroline (50), Clara (12), **Grace HARDY** (9)

1911: 2 Westcote Road, Streatham; Alfred STOKER (rent collector clerk, 19), nephew to William SALES (rent collector, widowed, 75); also living here was Alfred's sister Grace Evelyn STOKER (General Domestic, 15).

1911: **Grace Maud HARDY** (19) was a domestic cook for Conrade Elliot (76) a retired Provision Merchant at Wildwood Lodge, North End, Hampstead. Note that in 1901 Annie was also working in Hampstead, just a couple of miles away:



Two Mersea girls working at Hampstead (two miles apart) : Annie STOKER as a cook in 1901

and Grace HARDY as a domestic in 1911

- 1913: Met Police Heritage: Alfred (22) joined Metropolitan Police Service 21 April 1913 posted to Y division at Highgate, warrant number 102710.
- 1915: Alfred Stoker 1<sup>st</sup> May 1915 – 32s per week (£1.60) Inflation rate in 1915 was 12.5% and in 1914 it was -0.3%)
- 1916: Alfred Stoker 29<sup>th</sup> April 1916 – 33s per week (£1.65; 3.1% rise; inflation rate in 1916 was 18.1%1917 was 25.2%)
- 1917: Alfred Stoker (A division) 28<sup>th</sup> April 1917 – 34s per week (£1.70; 3.0% rise; inflation rate in 1917 was 25.2%)
- 1918: Alfred Stoker 27<sup>th</sup> April 1918 – 35s per week (£1.75; 2.9% rise; inflation rate in 1918 was 22%)
- 1918: Alfred STOKER (police constable, 27) married Grace (Gwen) Maud HARDY at West Mersea Parish Church, their address was Wellington Arch, Hyde Park Corner.



Outside West Mersea Parish Church, perhaps taken while waiting for the bride to arrive



1918: **Alfred STOKER** (26) and Grace (Gwen) Maud HARDY (26)'s wedding 27 April 1918

This photo is outside the STOKER family home, Riverside House, Coast Road, West Mersea.

Gwen (1892) was the daughter of John HARDY (1845) and Caroline WYATT (1851)

Children:

1. Eric Alfred STOKER (4<sup>th</sup> Dec 1919)
2. Kenneth M J STOKER (2<sup>nd</sup> July 1926)

1918: Entered service with RAF

30<sup>th</sup> October 1918 age 27 (Number 310617). Civilian occupation Police Constable (Code 35.443).  
Wife: Grace Maud 2, Harewood Place, Hanover Sq. W1.

5'10'' brown hair, grey eyes

Discharged 14<sup>th</sup> Nov 1918 – this coincides with the peak of the influenza pandemic at the end of WW1 (see Appendix A).

1918: Met Police Heritage: Alfred (27) left Metropolitan Police Service on 22 November 1918 from A Division Whitehall.

Police Orders dated 21<sup>st</sup> November: Resignation – Pay to Oct 29<sup>th</sup> last. [ i.e. when he joined RAF]

1919: From Alfred's reference letter: appointed assistant to William RUFFELL at Littlejohn Edinburgh early 1919.

1920: Reference letter from William RUFFELL (age 62) provided by Ken STOKER.

Written on paper from The Earl's Court Bournemouth on August 20<sup>th</sup> 1920.

THE EARL'S COURT,  
BOURNEMOUTH.

Aug 20.....1920

Mr Alfred Stoker was my assistant for about 18 months in my Catering & Confectionery business at 33 Leith St Edinburgh. He is highly intelligent quick at figures & a neat writer. He also has quite a mechanical turn of mind, can handle tools & make himself particularly useful about large premises. Given the opportunity he would prove quite a valuable servant. As I was retiring from business he had to leave, as the new management did not require him.

W.A. Ruffell  
Proprietor Littlejohn & Co 33 Leith St  
Edinburgh

Transcript:

Aug 20<sup>th</sup> 1920

Mr Alfred Stoker was my assistant for about 18 months in my Catering and Confectionary business at 33 Leith Street, Edinburgh. He is highly intelligent quick at figures and a neat writer. He also has quite a mechanical turn of mind, can handle tools and make himself particularly useful about large premises. Given the opportunity he would prove quite a valuable servant. As I was retiring from business he had to leave as the new management did not require him.

W.A. Ruffell

Proprietor Littlejohn + Co 33 Leith Street  
Edinburgh

1817: Scottish Post Office directory: Thomas Littlejohn, baker, 33 Leith street.

Robins notes: *Littlejohn's was taken over by Harry Swan...*

*with whom Nana [Annie] maintained friendly relations ever after.*

*Harry Swan, in time, became the Chairman of Leith's premier professional football team, Hib(ernian)s. Robin thinks that Harry had been manager of the tea-room before he took it over from "Uncle" [William RUFFELL]. Harry Swan earned a very good name as Chairman of Hibs; it was under Harry Swan that, not all that long after WW2, Hibs put in floodlighting at Easter Road & entered European football competition, both highly innovative moves at the time.*



Among his footballing memorabilia is a medal awarded for "best gateaux" in 1923.

William RUFFELL is listed as proprietor in 1920 Shop Restaurant etc. 31, 33 and 35 Leith Street. Henry Scott Swan is listed as proprietor in 1925, 1930, 1935 Shop Restaurant Bakehouse and Stores 31, 33 and 35 Leith Street. This is consistent with the 1920 date of Alfred's reference letter.

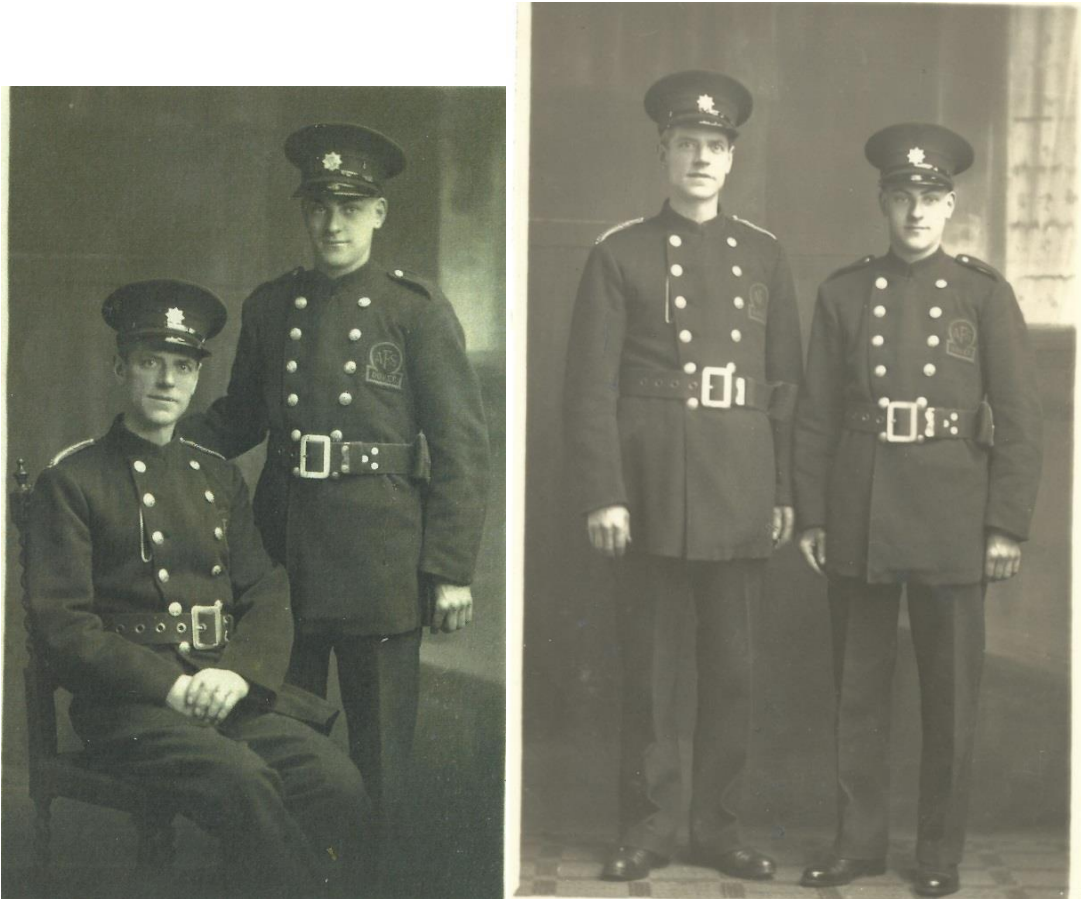
After leaving Littlejohn, Alfred then went off to Dover & took over a small café; this was something his time in Edinburgh had qualified him for. Alfred bought a shop, in a district of Dover called River, from which he principally sold paraffin, then the main source of heat and light in most

*households, and other drysalters' goods. He had a motor van, like Corporal Jones' in Dad's Army, with which he made home deliveries.*

1935: Alfred was present at his mother (Martha)'s death in Edinburgh (The Gables Lower Road , Dover given as his address). Ken STOKER can remember kissing his grandmother (Martha) goodbye at Mersea when she left for Edinburgh. Alfred and Martha were probably visiting Annie at the time.



1939: The Gables, Lower Road , Dover, Alfred, Grace (b. 24<sup>th</sup> July 1891), Eric A, Kenneth M J



Alfred STOKER and Eric STOKER, both in the National Fire Service (c/o Ken STOKER)



c1944: Alfred STOKER, Company Officer, National Fire Service, Section Leader

1951: Alfred died 14<sup>th</sup> Feb 1951 age 60

*Eric took over the shop on his father Alfred's death but later committed suicide [the same year that his mother died].*

1977: Gwen died 1977 age 86

**Eric STOKER (1919-1977)**

Eric Alfred STOKER born 4th Dec 1919, in 1939 he was an Auto Electrician.



Martha and Eric STOKER (1922)



Eric STOKER aged 4 (1923)



Eric in WW2

1944: Eric married Rita Dorothy DEVERSON

22 September 1944 - Dover Express



**LOCAL WEDDING.**

**L.A.C. E. A. STOKER, R.A.F.—**  
**MISS R. D. DEVERSON, N.F.S.**

The wedding took place on Thursday last week, at River Church, between Miss Rita Dorothy Deveson, N.F.S.; eldest daughter of Mrs. C. F. Mills and the late Mr. L. D. Deveson, of 3, Kingswood Villas, Dover, to L.A.C. Eric Alfred Stoker, R.A.F., eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. A. Stoker, of the Gables, Lower Rd., River. The Rev. C. K. Chadwick officiated, the service being choral. The bride, who was given away by her step-father, wore a gown of white silk morocain and georgette, trimmed with brilliants, a coronet headdress of gardenias, veil, and white satin shoes, and carried a shower bouquet of red carnations. The bridesmaids were Miss Brenda Deveson (chief) (sister of bride) and Miss Joyce Mills (step-sister) who wore ankle-length dresses of pale blue satin, headdresses and veils to match, and silver shoes, and carried bouquets of yellow and pink chrysanthemums. They both wore gold crosses and chains, the gifts of the bridegroom. The best man was Mr. R. Palmer (friend of the bridegroom). The reception was held at River Church Hall. The honeymoon was spent at Mersea, the bride travelling in a short beige fur coat, wine dress, and accessories to match. Mr. and Mrs. Stoker were the recipients of many presents, including those from the Officers, Men, and Women of Sub-Divisional Control 3, and Firewomen of all N.F.S. Stations, Dover. The cars were supplied by Mr. H. J. Sawyer, of High St., Dover.

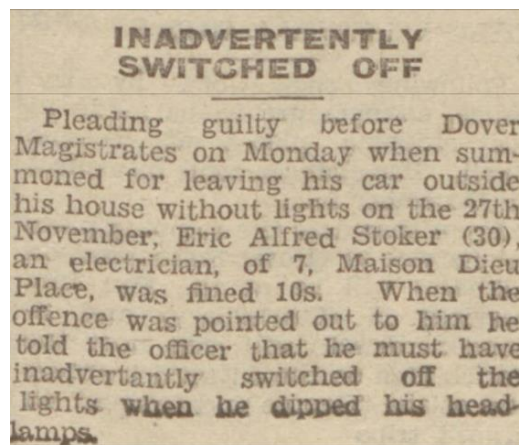
Eric – Rita (Sept 1944)

1946: Linda A STOKER was born



Linda (b. Q3 1946)

1949: Dover Express 16 December 1949: Eric fined 10s





Grace HEWES (nee STOKER) and Rita STOKER (Eric STOKER's wife)

1977: Eric died 1977

**Ken Stoker (1926)**

1926: Kenneth M J STOKER was born 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1926.

*Ken who was in the RAF during the war, in Air Sea Rescue, (& when visiting Mum [Ena] in Edinburgh famously had his photo taken in full Highland dress, to his immense & lasting satisfaction).*

1948: Ken STOKER (Ex RAF ASR motor boat crew), married Margaret PHOENIX 7<sup>th</sup> June 1948 (Margaret was born 11<sup>th</sup> Dec 1927, she died 28<sup>th</sup> May 2018).

1949: Patricia D STOKER 1949,

1963: Richard Alan STOKER 24.7.1963 m. Wendy SKILLIN

Joss Stone (Jocelyn Eve STOKER b 11<sup>th</sup> April 1986 in Ashill, Devon) is a famous singer, songwriter and actress.

1964: Lisa Anne STOKER 23.6.1964

1980: Ken STOKER m. Daphne Joan May SKIPWORTH (11 April 1924 - 27 Dec. 2017)

*They were both officers in the British Legion and are usually to be seen in Legion uniform whenever there is any ceremony at the Battle of Britain Memorial in Dover.*



Ken STOKER (68) at the Battle of Britain Memorial unveiled by Queen Mother 9 July 1993

(68) Ken Stoker with  
(EX R.A.F. A.S.R.)  
Standard Bearer  
Dover R.A.F. Asso

(72) FLT/ROGER HALL D.F.C.  
SPITFIRE PILOT  
IN THE BATTLE OF  
BRITAIN

At the B of B. Memorial  
between Dover & Folkestone  
at Unveiling by the Queen Mother.



Daphne and Ken STOKER



2010

#### 1.4 Sidney STOKER (1893-1969)

1893: Sidney STOKER was born 22<sup>nd</sup> Aug 1893

1901: Rainbow Field, Village, West Mersea: William John STOKER (Mariner, 43), Martha A (38), Leonard W (Fisherman, 14), Alfred (9), **Sidney** (7), Grace E (5), Hilda (1)

1901: West Mersea Council School Log Book Page 72.

*18 October 1901 The attendance on Monday was bad, owing chiefly to its being Tollesbury Regatta. The following children were absent on that account: Edwd. Hews, R. Fletcher, Ezra, Cecil & Clif. Mussett, Jas. Hempstead, Cecil and Alfd. Mole, Foster Dixon, **Syd. Stoker** [age 8], Horace French.*

1904: West Mersea Council School Log Book Page 161 [Mersea Museum]

*14 October 1904 **Sydney STOKER** [age 11] has gone to London for two or three months.*

1906: West Mersea Council School Log Book Page 208 [Mersea Museum]

*23 March 1906 The nine children, Dora Woodward, Bertie Say, Willie Greenleaf, Travis Wright, **Sydney STOKER** [age 13], Elsie Brown [Andy BROWN's grandad's sister], Nellie Sharp, Cyril Banks and Ivy Boon, who passed at the recent examination, have left school.*



Inside the old Victory

Top row: ??, John MILGATE, Ernie CUDMORE, William WYATT, **Len STOKER**, ??, ??, Ernie WELLS

Zebedee MILGATE, Louis FARTHING, **Sid STOKER**, Herbert Welham, Charlie Mussett and Bob Burgess

1911: West Mersea Riverside House with parents William John STOKER (fisherman,52) and Martha Anne (47 ), Leonard William (24, fisherman), **Sidney** (17, apprentice carpenter), Hilda (11), Vera (6)

Sidney STOKER was on the racing yacht SONIA for two years 1913-14. At Cowes when War broke out; a lot of the crew were Naval Reserve and had to report, so hardly any crew at all. Sailing experience all learnt round Mersea. Dabchicks started in 1911. Sidney was a member and has lots of cups. He won the last cup in 1932. He had his own boat - 17ft called NAIAD. He did not sell it - boat was left and just fell to pieces.

1911: West Mersea Old Victory: Alfred John CUDMORE (Fisherman, 62), Mary Ann (54), Ella Kate (26), Arne Alfred (Bricklayer, 24), **Grace Annie** (18), Violet May (16),



1915: Sidney STOKER joined N Division (Islington) 11 January 1915, warrant number 104715. Age on joining 21, height 5'8, previous occupation carpenter.

Met Police Archives at The Annexe, Empress State Building, Lillie Road, London, SW6 1TR:

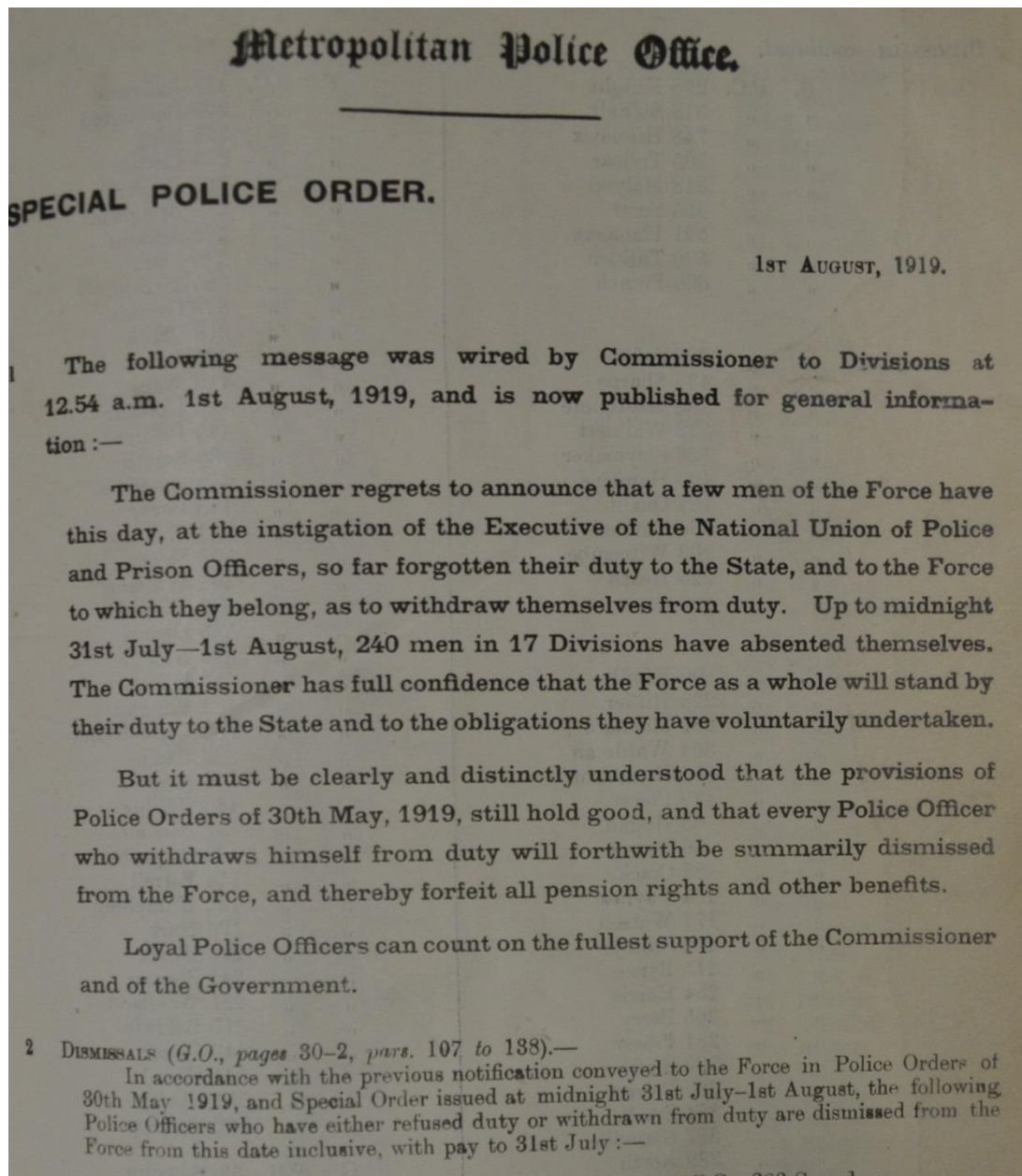
1916: Sidney Stoker 22<sup>nd</sup> Jan 1916 – 31s per week (£1.55) Inflation rate in 1916 was 18.1%, (in 1915 it was 12.5% and in 1914 it was -0.3%)

1917: Sidney Stoker 20<sup>th</sup> Jan 1917 – 32s per week (£1.60; 3.2% rise; inflation rate in 1917 was 25.2%)

1918: Sidney Stoker 19<sup>th</sup> Jan 1918 – 33s per week (£1.65; 3.1% rise; inflation rate in 1918 was 22 %)

Note there was a Police strike in 1918

1919: Sidney Stoker 18<sup>th</sup> Jan 1919 – 47s per week (£2.35; 42% rise; inflation rate in 1919 was 10.1 %)

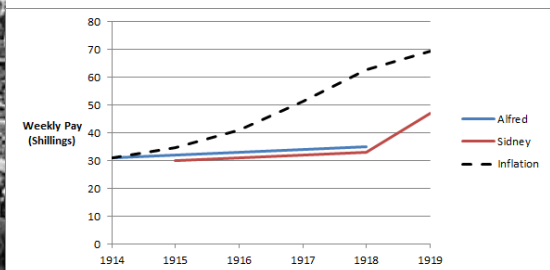


1919: Dismissed from M Division (Southwark) for going on strike August 1919.



Sidney STOKER (PC 1137)

Sidney was dismissed along with 1,155 other officers for taking part in the 1919 police strike.



Back then, a London policeman's wage was comparable to that of an agricultural worker or unskilled labourer. The cost of living had more than doubled during the first world war, but police had received a pay rise of only 3 shillings since 1914. This was compounded by large numbers of police officers having been sucked into the army, placing a greater strain on those left at home. They ended up working a 96-hour week, with leave restricted to one day a fortnight. And so, two months before the end of the war, police officers went on strike for the first time.

The National Union of Police and Prison Officers (NUPPO) had a largely underground existence until 1918. The first strike started on August 30th, 1918. August 31st began with a mass meeting of nearly 1,000 strikers at the Finsbury Park Empire. These then marched to Whitehall where they joined up with contingents from other parts of London. The men's delegates negotiated directly with Smuts and Lloyd George; the authorities caved in.

As far as union recognition was concerned, Lloyd George stated that this could not be granted in time of war. The Police Act of 1919 was the death knell of NUPPO and the Police Federation was established to replace the union. Under the Act, NUPPO was outlawed as a representative body for the police and forbade them from belonging to a trade union. NUPPO had no options but to fight or fold; unsurprisingly, it chose to fight. The second police strike started on July 31st, 1919. It was a disaster. Out of a force of 18,200 men in the Metropolitan Police, only 1,156 participated in the strike, all of whom were instantly dismissed [this included Sidney].

Sidney joined a Battalion of the [Kitchener] New Armies: the 11th (Service) Battalion (Pioneers) Kings (Liverpool Regiment). This was formed at Seaforth, Liverpool on 23 August 1914 as part of K1 and attached as Army Troops to 14th (Light) Division at Barrosa Barracks, Aldershot. On 11 January 1915 it converted into Pioneer Battalion and landed in France on 30<sup>th</sup> May 1915. On 27<sup>th</sup> April 1918 it was reduced to a cadre at Molingham, S.E. of Aire and returned to England on 17<sup>th</sup> June and absorbed into 15th Battalion at Brookwood, the Loyal North Lancashire Regiment on 19<sup>th</sup> June 1918.



**Sidney STOKER** aged 25 (i.e. 1919) – and dated 8/8/1917 (i.e. aged 23)

1917: **Sidney STOKER** (24) married Grace Annie Cudmore (25) in West Mersea Parish Church 19 May 1917. Grace was born 5<sup>th</sup> July 1892.

After they were married, Sidney was in the Police Force - 27/6 a week. He was in the Metropolitan Police, Stoke Newington and Waltham Abbey - joined the Army from Waltham Abbey.

Children:

1. Ernest STOKER (1918), born February 8<sup>th</sup> 1918, died 10th November that same year from influenza (the "Spanish Flu" epidemic at the end of WW1 (see Appendix A)
2. Joyce Barbara STOKER (23<sup>rd</sup> Nov 1920)

1918: Absent Voters list The Old Victory Sidney STOKER 87829 Private, 11<sup>th</sup> Kings Liverpool,

1914-1920: Medal Index: Listed as Private Acting Lance Corporal, Sergeant in King's Liverpool Regiment.

Name <b>STOKER Sidney</b>		Rank <b>K. 2nd Lt. R</b>	Regt. No. <b>Sgt 87829</b>
Medal	Unit <b>328</b>	Power	Remarks
Victoria Cross	<b>11/2/02</b>	<b>2856</b>	
British	<b>Do</b>	<b>Do</b>	
Star			
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry therein			



Grace CUDMORE



Joyce 1 year 9 months (1922)



Joyce Barbara STOKER (b. 23.11.1920) 2 yrs 10 months



6 months (18.5.1921)

1921: Register of Electors, Old Vic: Sidney STOKER



Hartley BROWN, Bert FRENCH and Sid STOKER on Stonehill Hard



Grace (30) – Joyce (2)

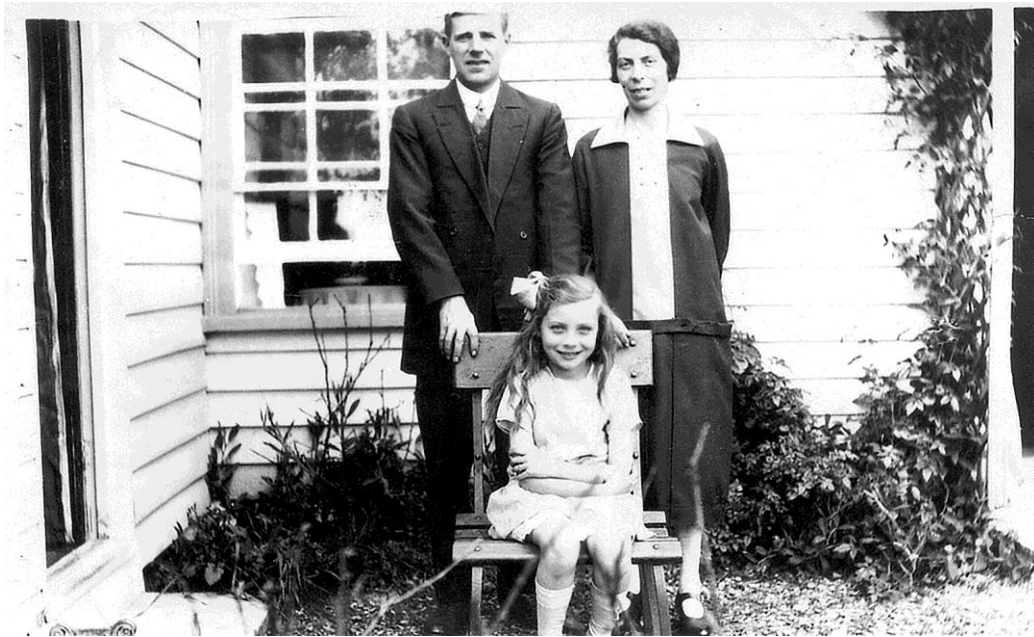
1922: Mersea Bus Park. Primrose bus garage - Mersea, Colchester & District Transport & Bus Coy Ltd.

Behind the stores at Clifford White's yard the engine shed housed a large single-cylinder engine with a large flywheel which was used to drive the woodwork machines, circular saws, planers, etc. This engine was replaced about 1947 by a multi-cylinder Paxman Ricardo. Sid STOKER was in charge of this department and also looked after the engine.



Clifford White's sawmill in Barfield Road

L-R 1., 2., 3., 4. Reg Jay, 5., 6., 7. **Sid STOKER**, 8. Hector Farthing, 9.



1926: Sidney (33) – Grace (34) - Joyce (6) at Riverside, Mersea (c 1926)

1926: Alfred John CUDMORE, died 28 Jan 1926 aged 78 (buried at Barfield Road cemetery, Mersea).

1931, 1936, 1945, 1955:Electoral registers: Old Vic Sidney and Grace STOKER

1939 West Mersea, The Old Victory, The Lane: Sidney Stoker (Carpenter, 46), Grace (47) and Joyce (19), Mary A Cudmore (widow , 85), Ernest A Cudmore (53)



Sidney & Grace



1948: Whist Drive for May Ann Cudmore's 94th Birthday, probably Nov. 1948

Back Row: Clara WARD, Mrs GREEN, Irene GANT, Sheila CHATTERS, Hilda CUDMORE, Mrs H. KEENE, Mrs Laddie HEWES, Florence STOKER. Gertie MUSSETT.

Front Winnie WOODS, Violet CHATTERS, May Ann CUDMORE, Grace STOKER, May BREWINGTON, Gladys Chatters.

1954: Mary CUDMORE died 15 May 1954 aged 100.

1969: Sidney STOKER died 21<sup>st</sup> Dec 1969 age 76

1973: Electoral register: Old Vic, Grace STOKER (140, Coast Road)

1975: Grace Annie STOKER died 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1975 age 82



Joyce STOKER



*Next to Joyce on left is Stella Blanche Mole. The tall lad at the back is Sid Burgess and in front of him with curly hair is Johnny Hempstead. The boat looks like Wyatt's 'Hack Boat', with a roller in the stern in place of the skulling hole. – Ron Green*



Front: Sid BURGESS, Johnny HEMPSTEAD, Joyce STOKER, Stella Balnche MOLE



Grace & Joyce



Joyce



Joyce



Joyce – Regent Portraits (London)



Note by Robin EDWARDS on Ancestry:

*Mum [Ena EDWARDS] kept up a long running correspondence with "Cousin Joyce" (as she always referred to her) & Joyce (who married "Bunts"). Jill has a lovely story about her mother meeting & marrying "Bunts" during the war. (They were both in uniform). The first time Bunts laid eyes on Joyce he vaulted a wall to meet up with her. Joyce was impressed - but neither set of parents thought the engagement was well advised.*

*However the date for the marriage was fixed: only for Bunts to find that he was required for military duties that day. He wangled a swap of duties with a pal & caught the train. Unbeknownst to him his parents were on the same train. Bunts found them & promptly put them up to a stunt - when they arrived at Joyce's parents' they were to say that Bunts was not going to make it: he hadn't been able to fix his leave. Whereupon the air turned blue as J's parents let rip to say what they really thought of the groom-to-be. But Bunts had sneaked in the back door & at the appropriate moment announced his presence after all: by skimming his service cap into the room.*

And so it was that...

1943: Joyce STOKER married Harry ("Bunts") Arthur KEENE on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1943 at West Mersea Church



Cousins Eileen BROWN bridesmaid on right and Sheila CHATTERS, Geoff HEWES page boy.



**OCTOBER 8, 1943.**  
**WEDDING.**—The wedding took place at the Parish Church on Saturday, October 2, of Marine H. (Bunts) Keene, only son of Mr. and Mrs. A. H. Keene of Egham, Surrey, to Miss Joyce Barbara Stoker, only child of Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Stoker of the Old Victory, West Marsee. The service was choral, with Mrs. C. Pierrepont Edwards at the organ. The vicar (Rev. C. Pierrepont Edwards, M.C.) officiated. The bride looked very attractive in her white satin dress with veil and coronet of orange blossom, and silver shoes. Her jewellery was a gift of Mrs. Webb, of the Nothe. She carried a bouquet of pink and white carnations. Her bridesmaids were Miss Sheila Chatters and Miss Eileen Brown, cousins of bride. The former wore a picturesque dress of peach cloque with short veil and floral headdress, and Miss Brown wore a similar dress in powder blue, with matching accessories; both carried bouquets of pale pink carnations. The small page in a white sailor suit was Geoffrey Hewes, friend of bride, to whom he presented a silver horseshoe as she left the church. The bride was given away by her father, and Lieut. R. Johnson, was best man. A reception was afterwards held at the Fountain Hall where some 45 guests assembled. The beautiful three-tiered iced cake was made by Mrs. Oscar Whiting. There was no honeymoon as the bridegroom had to return to duty almost immediately, and the bride will shortly return to her unit in the W.A.A.F.'s, in which she is an L.A.C.

1943 Harry & Joyce KEENE

Children:

1. Wendy Carole KEENE (1943-)
2. Barry Richard KEENE (1947-2016) m. 2 Dec 1967 Jennifer Maysie COCK
3. Jillian Sonya KEENE (1959-)



Joyce - Fred Wass & wife, Dorothy

Fred WASS' daughter Sue, CHATTERS? wife, Dorothy



Joyce and probably Barry (c 1947)



1960:

Jill KEENE (1)



Jill KEENE -



c1952: Barry (5) - Wendy KEENE(6)



Wendy KEENE

2001: Joyce KEENE died June 2001 age 81

2006: Harry KEENE died 2006 age 83

2016: Barry KEENE died 2016 age 69

### 1.5 Grace Evelyn STOKER (1896-1951)

1896: **Grace Evelyn STOKER** was born 30<sup>th</sup> March 1896.

1901: Rainbow Field, Village, West Mersea: William John STOKER (Mariner, 43), Martha A (38), Leonard W (Fisherman, 14), Alfred (9), Sidney (7), **Grace E** (5), Hilda (1)

1911: 2 Westcote Road, Streatham; Alfred STOKER (rent collector clerk, 19), nephew to William SALES (rent collector, widowed, 75), also living here was Alfred's sister **Grace Evelyn STOKER** (General Domestic, 15).



1924: 25<sup>th</sup> December From Mersea Museum: **Grace STOKER** and Sidney HEWES (1893) wedding

*Grace's father William John STOKER stands on the right and Samuel Burton Hewes, one of the witnesses, is on the left. The bridesmaid on the right is Florrie Hewes. Maisie Hewes, now Jenkins, the little bridesmaid on the left remembers the day. Grace and Sidney ran a shop on the front at Mersea.*

1939: Sidney HEWES General Shop Keeper, **Grace E**, Annie HEWES (b. 29<sup>th</sup> April 1889)



**Grace HEWES**, Hilda BROWN, ? , Vera DERHAM and Eileen BROWN



**Grace HEWES** (nee STOKER) and Rita STOKER (Eric STOKER's wife)

1.6 **Hilda STOKER** (1899-1957)

1899: **Hilda STOKER** was born 7<sup>th</sup> April 1899

1901: Rainbow Field, Village, West Mersea: William John STOKER (Mariner, 43), Martha A (38), Leonard W (Fisherman, 14), Alfred (9), Sidney (7), Grace E (5), **Hilda** (1)



c1910

Front row 2nd left Gladys Wyatt, 5th left Hilda Stoker (12)

1911: West Mersea Riverside House with parents William John STOKER (fisherman,52) and Martha Anne (47 ), Leonard William (24, fisherman), Sidney (17, apprentice carpenter), **Hilda** (11), Vera (6)

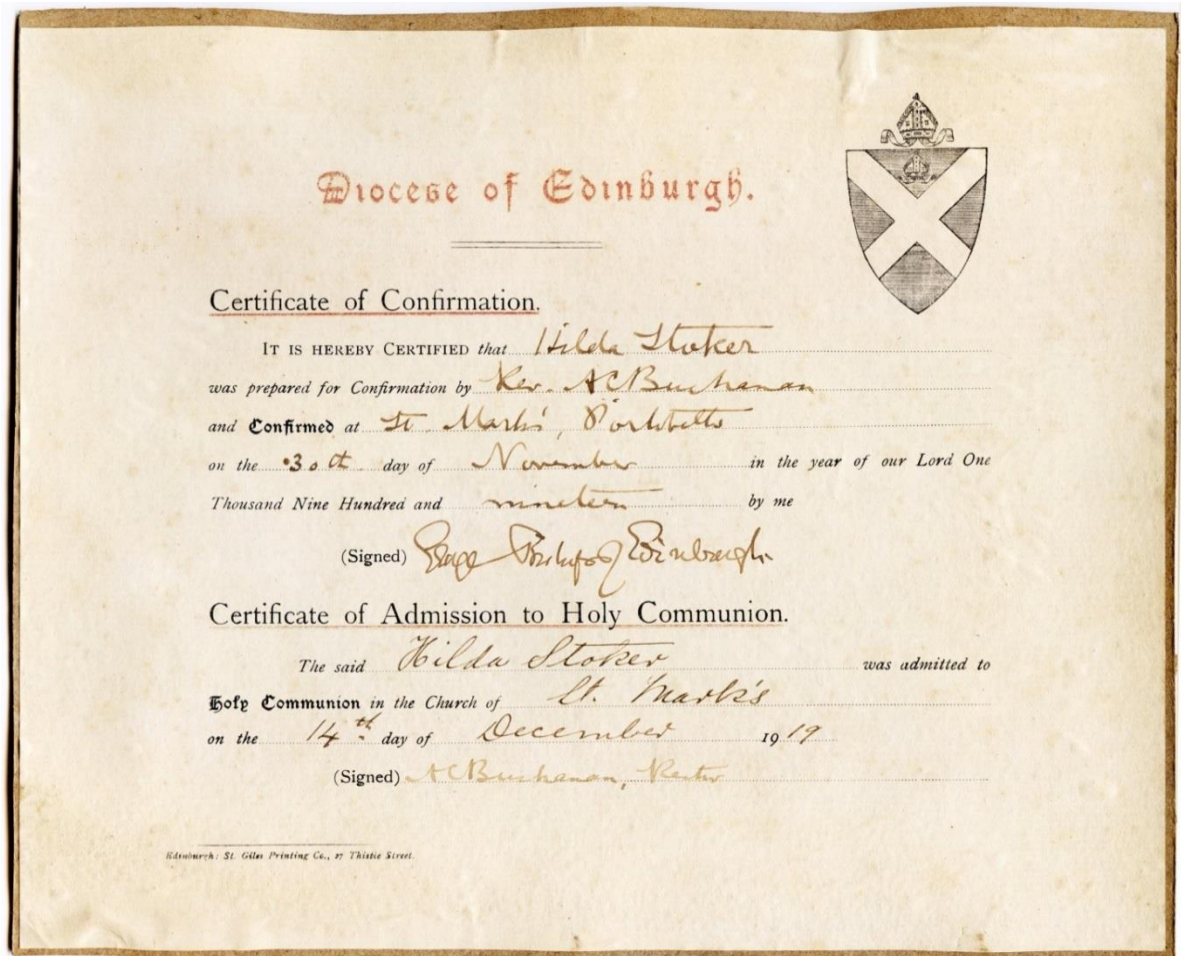


1917: Hartley BROWN (19)

Postcard to Hilda dated 20<sup>th</sup> Sept 1919



Hilda STOKER



1919: Hilda STOKER Confirmation Certificate dated 14<sup>th</sup> December 1919 and the Church is St Marks, Portobello. This framed certificate was found by Matthew Haward in 2017 while he was doing building work at Dabchicks Sailing Club. It was behind a wall in the kitchen. On this site was William Wyatt's shed and this became the first Dabchicks Sailing Clubhouse.

From Ena's son Robin EDWARDS' Ancestry notes the Ruffell family (including Henry RUFFELL) lived for a prolonged period in one of the 12 Apostles -a row of 12 houses that then stood alone on the main road leading past Portobello to Joppa and the coast.

Hilda (aged 20 at the time) was probably visiting her sister Annie (34), husband William (63) and Annie's daughter Ena(12) and her son Henry (6) in Edinburgh in 1919.



1922: Vera STOKER (17), Ethel(26), Elsie(30) and Nellie BROWN(19)., ??, Hilda STOKER(23), ??.

Hilda has a ring on her middle finger which would make it pre 1924

1924: Hilda STOKER (25) married Hartley BROWN (Newsagent, 26 living at Station Road Tiptree) at West Mersea Parish Church on 15<sup>th</sup> Nov 1924



Hec Farthing's sister, Nellie (21) & Charles (30), Hartley BROWN (26), Hilda (25), Grace (28), Vera STOKER (19)  
Charles BROWN (56), Emily OLIVER (56), Martha FRENCH (60), William STOKER (65)

Children:

1. Eileen Phylis BROWN (1928-1997)
2. Dorothy O BROWN (1932-2018)

1928: Eileen Phylis BROWN born 18<sup>th</sup> Jan 1928.



Hartley sitting on bus step with Eileen (probably one of the Bluebird buses)



1930:

Hartley and Eileen BROWN

1932: Dorothy Hilda BROWN born 14<sup>th</sup> August 1932.

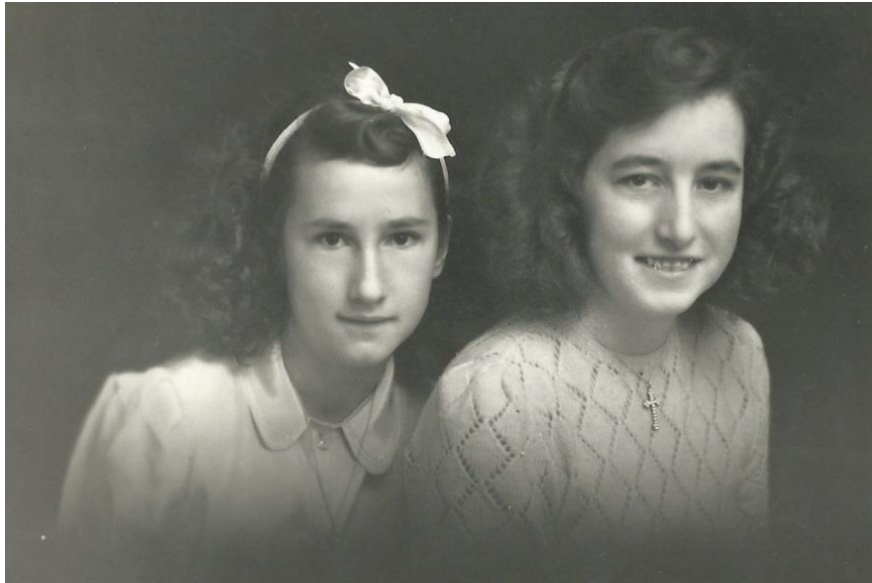


1932: Eileen (4) and Dorothy (0) BROWN



1932: Eileen (4) and Dorothy (0) BROWN and Hilda (33)

1939: Hartley O (Mariner), Hilda, Eileen P, Dorothy H, George BROWN (Widowed)



1942:

Dorothy (10) and Eileen (14) BROWN



Hilda BROWN, sister in-law Florence STOKER (Len's wife), sister Grace HEWES


1957: Hilda died Dec 31<sup>st</sup> 1957, aged 58

1971: Hartley died (Colchester 4a, 1711) Q4 age 73.

1997: Eileen BROWN died age 69

2018: Dorothy BROWN died 20<sup>th</sup> Sept 2018 aged 86.


In Loving Memory of  
*Dorothy Hilda Brown*



14th August 1932 - 20th September 2018

St Peter & St Paul Church, West Mersea  
Wednesday 31st October 2018  
at 12 noon

Funeral service conducted by Reverend Brian Snelling



Following the service we will be attending the crematorium at 1.15 pm (all welcome if wished) or alternatively please gather at The Old Victory, 140 Coast Road, West Mersea and the family will join you there for refreshments soon after.

East of England Co-operative Funeral Services  
44 Kingsland Road, West Mersea, Colchester, Essex CO5 8RA  
01206 382120

**Gathering Music**  
Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring  
by Bach

**Welcome and Opening Prayer**

**Hymn**  
The Lord's My Shepherd

**Eulogy**  
by Jill Keene, Dorothy's goddaughter

**Poem**  
My Treasure Island  
read by Karen Sewell, wife of Dorothy's godson, Trevor

**Bible Reading**  
1 Corinthians 13

**Address**

**Hymn**  
Eternal Father, Strong To Save

**Prayers**  
The Lord's Prayer  
Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name.  
Thy Kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the Kingdom,  
the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.

**Hymn**  
All Things Bright and Beautiful

**Commendation**

**Closing Prayer**

**Closing Music**  
Sheep May Safely Graze  
by Bach

### 1.7 Vera Kate STOKER (1905-2002)

1905: Vera Kate STOKER born 20<sup>th</sup> April 1905

1911: West Mersea Riverside House with parents William John STOKER (fisherman,52) and Martha Anne (47 ), Leonard William (24, fisherman), Sidney (17, apprentice carpenter), Hilda (11), **Vera** (6)



1926: **Vera Kate STOKER** married Henry Frank Derham (1897) *a policeman*

Robin's notes: *Uncle Harry's claim to fame in my book is that he took the helm of a sailing boat (when Uncle Hart, the obvious skipper was, presumably, absent) & promptly (before we were much away from the hard) dismasted her by sailing under (as he thought, if he thought at all) the bowsprit of a larger vessel. Our mast crashed down, just where, moments before, I had been trailing a hand over the side before being told by Mum to stop because it was too dangerous. Little did she know??*

Children:

1. Leonard F DERHAM (1927) Lexden.

*Named after his uncle Leonard STOKER who died the previous year (1926).*



c1931:

Leonard DERHAM (4)





c1932:

Hilda STOKER (33) – Vera STOKER (28)  
Eileen BROWN (4) – Leonard DERHAM(5)



“Jack and Jill” = Eileen BROWN (4) – Leonard DERHAM(5)



Leonard DERHAM(5) - Eileen BROWN (4) – outside Riverside House



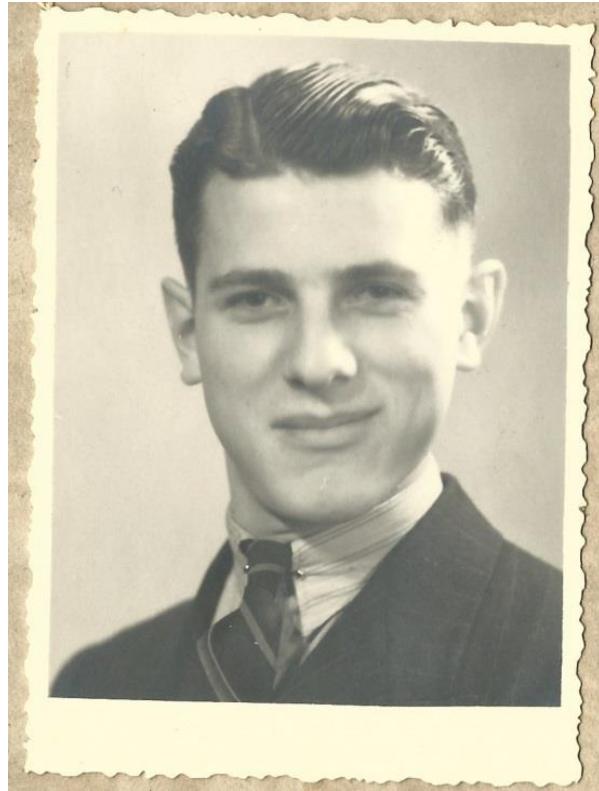
1939: 36 Cranborne Crescent , Potters Bar: Vera K (34), Henry F. (Met Police Sergeant, 42) b. 11<sup>th</sup> Aug 1897, [Leonard (12)]



Dorothy BROWN, Vera STOKER, Henry DERHAM, Leonard DERHAM (front)



Henry DERHAM and Vera STOKER



Leonard F DERHAM



Eileen BROWN and Leonard DERHAM

1953: Henry DERHAM died 30<sup>th</sup> March 1953 aged 55.

2002: Vera Kate STOKER died 2002 at Watford age 97



Ken STOKER and Vera DERHAM (nee STOKER)

Dorothy

Daphne



Dorothy Daphne Eileen



Dorothy Ken Eileen



Any clues ??

## The Coast Road – Riverside House and Old Victory

This section explores historical occupants of River House (the Stokers home from about 1907) and the Old Victory, formerly a Public House.

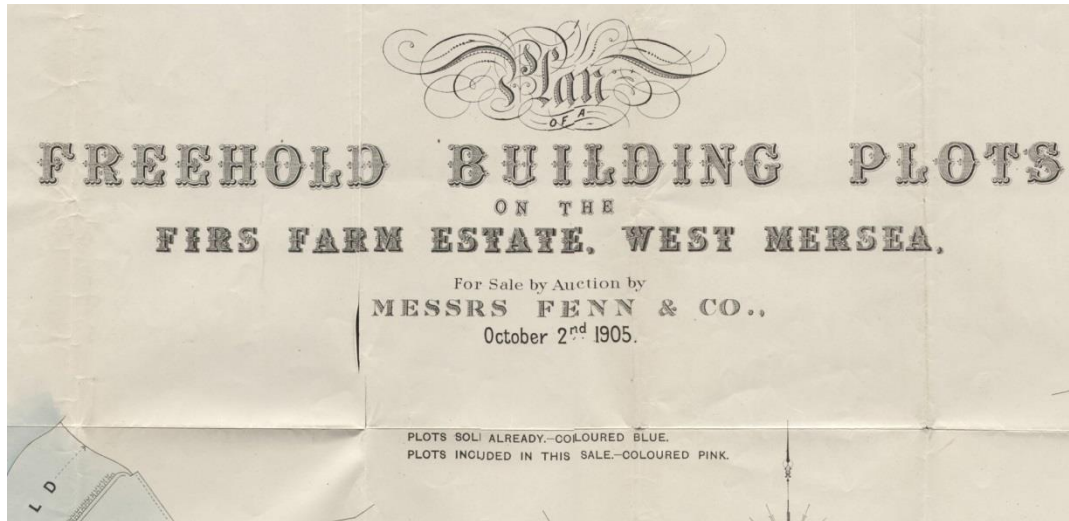
The occupants of each household were collected in Census records every ten years and those taken between 1841 to 1911 are publically available. A survey was also taken in 1939 and some electoral registers indicate the address of eligible voters.

Households were usually given a household reference number which corresponded to the order in which census was taken, but not the actual address – sometimes the house name or street name would be included. Using these clues it is possible to translate occupants to particular buildings between consecutive census records. For example, the same building might be occupied by the same family for several decades, and this can also reveal the route of a particular census taker.

The map below is part of the 1897 Ordnance Survey map. The census records reviewed include households around The Firs, The Lane (Mersea Lane) and the Coast Road. The Old Victory is located at the junction of The Lane and the Coast Road, and **Riverside House** (aka River House) is located on the Coast road near Firs Chase, the other side of Firs Chase on the Coast Road is **Stone House**



Part of Ordnance Survey 1897 Map Sheet XLVI 8



1905: Plots

The result of this correlation between census records is shown in the following table, showing who lived at a particular household number and if the house name was included in the census record.

## The Coast Road, West Mersea

1861	27. <b>Public House Victory</b> George Brand (43) Patience (42)					52. William Cook (31) Harriet (32)	51. James Wolf	50. Henry May (58)
1871	87. George Brand(53) Patience (54)						67. William Cooke (41) Harriet (42)	66. [Stone House] Henry May (68)
1881	63. <b>Victory Inn</b> George Brand (61) Patience (61)	;	;	57. <b>Rose Cottage</b> George Cooke (44)			56. <b>River House</b> William H Cooke (43) Elizabeth (50) Clara (15)	55. <b>Stone House</b> Henry May (78)
1891	83. <b>Victory Inn</b> George Brand (44) Mary Ann (40)	;	;	79. George Cooke (54) Emma (54) Munson (26)	78. Sidney Hewes (43)	77. Edwin Cooke (26)	76. <b>Riverside</b> William H Cooke (53) Elizabeth (58) Clara (25) Harry French (30) & Alice (nee Cooke,29)	75. <b>Stone House</b> Henry May (88)
1901	Missing pages in census! William Trim? Notified originator.	48. Emma Cooke (64) Munson(36)	49. Henry French (40) Isabella (39)	50. Sidney Hewes (54)	51. Edwin L Cooke (36) (son of Elijah)	52. Percy Rudlin (30)	53. William H Cooke (63) Elizabeth (72)	59. <b>Stone House</b> Samson Gentry (64)
1911	140. <b>Old Victory</b> Alfred Cudmore (62) Mary Ann (54)		213. <b>Rose Cottage</b> Emma Cooke (74) Munson (46)	212. Percy Rudlin (40)	211. <b>Fleet View</b> Sidney Hewes (66)	210. Elijah L Cooke (widower, 79)	209. <b>Riverside</b> William Stoker (52), Martha (48)	208. <b>Stone House</b> John Harden (38)

**Riverside House**



Riverside House (from West Mersea Museum website) later 118 Coast Road.

Lady on left is Martha STOKER, the girl standing is daughter Grace STOKER, others are unknown visitors



William STOKER and daughter Vera at Riverside House



Riverside House

Census record in the table indicate that the occupants of Riverside House before the Stokers were from the Cooke family. Between 1871 and 1881 there were two William Cookes, but their ages were not different by ten years as expected. After constructing the Cooke family tree it turned out that there were two different William Cookes. William Haward Cooke was the son of William Cooke's cousin Elijah William Cooke.

After discussion with Brian JAY, Margaret GRAHAM and family have very kindly allowed us (Andy BROWN, Bran JAY and Don RAINBIRD) to view the many deeds and documents related to Riverside House. Key information from these documents has been combined below with data from other sources.

1867: Sited in 1872 document: Conveyance of parcel of land (144 ft part of larger piece of land known as Little Field numbered 256 on the Tithe map) from Isobella COOKE to Alexander BEAN

1872: Conveyance of parcel of land (144 ft part of larger piece of land known as Little Field numbered 256 on the Tithe map) on 4<sup>th</sup> May from Alexander BEAN (Peldon Hall) to William COOKE (Oyster Merchant) for £66 13s. Other parts of Little Field had recently been sold to Elijah Longstaff COOKE and George COOKE [both brothers of William Haward COOKE].

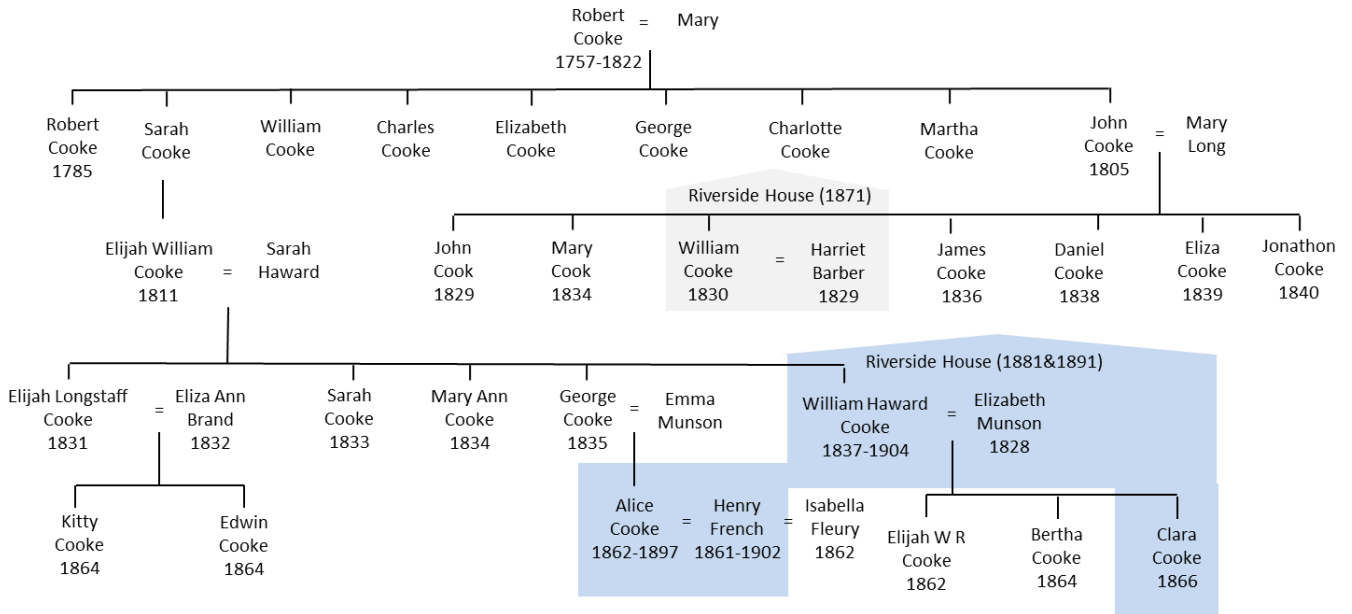
1875: Mortgage between William Cooke (Oyster merchant) and Louisa Coe (Colchester) on 24<sup>th</sup> April for an advance of £150.

1880: Mortgage between William Cooke and Joseph Tracy on 18<sup>th</sup> March.

1887: Indenture between Louisa Coe and Joseph Tracy on 5<sup>th</sup> November.

1899: Reconveyance J P Tracy (deceased) to William Cooke on 28<sup>th</sup> September.

1899: Mortgage between William Cooke (Water Bailiff) and Trustees Willoughby John BEAN (Oyster Merchant, West Mersea), Rupert George St John NAYLOR Foresters Friendly Society on 29<sup>th</sup> September.



The Cooke Family – there were two William Cookes

It also transpires that William Hawards Cooke’s son, Elijah W R Cooke, a Rent Collector also known as Robert Cooke, was the local Enumerator for the 1901 census in this area. After realising that his route went along the Coast Road, then up Firs Lane for a few households and then back to the Coast Road at Stone House, it appears that the occupant of Riverside House in 1901 was probably still William Haward Cooke (the 1901 census did not provide the house name).

Living close by were some other Cookes. William Hawards Cooke’s nephew, Edwin Cooke lived next to **Riverside House** in 1871 and 1881, then his father (William’s brother) Elijah Longstaff Cooke lived in the same place in 1891 when Edwin moved to Colchester. Elijah and Edwin were next door to another long term resident Sidney Hewes at **Fleet View**.



Alice, Emma and Munson Cooke at **Rose Cottage**

William Haward Cooke’s older brother, George Cooke, lived a little further along the Coast Road toward the Old Victory. His widow, Emma Cooke and son Munson stayed in this house, called **Rose Cottage**,

located just before The Lane. Their daughter, Alice Cooke, married Henry French, and in 1891 they lived at **Riverside House** with her uncle William Haward Cooke.

1900: Will of William COOKE dated 22<sup>nd</sup> May in which he bequeaths Riverside to his wife Elisabeth.

1904: William Hayward COOKE (1838) died 28<sup>th</sup> July 1904 age 66 (Lexden 4a 505), son "Robert" present at death [this must have been son Elijah W R Cooke (b. 1862)] William's Will dated 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1900 bequeaths Riverside House to his wife Elisabeth.

1906: Conveyance of Riverside House from Elisabeth Cooke (Vendor, widow) to William SALES (Melrose, Westcote Road Streatham) for £175 on 23<sup>rd</sup> July. Property bounded by Edwin Cooke to the north, Mrs Dames to the south, the Hard to the west. Parcel of land purchased from Alexander Bean now in the occupation of Laura Jones. Witnessed by Clara PULLEN (daughter of Elisabeth COOKE).

1906: Conveyance of Riverside House from William SALES to Mrs Martha Ann STOKER for £175 on 28<sup>th</sup> August.

1909-1911: Electoral register: William STOKER (Coast)

c1910 Riverside House



Alfred (18), Hilda(11), Vera (5), William (51), Annie (25), Martha (48), Leonard (23), Grace (14), Sidney (16)

1911: West Mersea ,Riverside House; **William John STOKER** (fisherman,52) and Martha Anne (47), Leonard William (24, fisherman), Sidney (17, apprentice carpenter), Hilda (11), Vera (6)

1913: Conveyance of Riverside House from Martha Ann STOKER (Vendor, wife of John STOKER) to William SALES (Purchaser, formerly of Melrose, Westcote Road Streatham, now 47, Fentimen Road, Surrey) Riverside House for £150 on 10<sup>th</sup> July.

1920: Conveyance of Riverside House on 21<sup>st</sup> June by William SALES' Executors Percy Edwards ROBERTS (194, Valley Road Streatham), William James Powsland ("Lynton", 22, Alfriston Road, Clapham Common) to Grace Evelyn STOKER (spinster). William Sales' (late of 47, Fentimen Road, Clapham Road) Will dated 14<sup>th</sup> July 1917. He died on 13<sup>th</sup> June 1918. [Note that Grace and Alfred were living with William Sales in 1911 – see Annie STOKER's section].

Electoral Register:

- 1921-22: Riverside House: **William John STOKER** , Martha Anne
- 1924: Redemption (Cert No 34849) of £1 9s 2d paid by Mrs Martha STOKER to The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, 10 Whitehall Place London SW1.
- 1923-29: Riverside House: **William John STOKER** , Martha Anne, Arthur STOKER (William's younger brother b.1878)
- 1930: Riverside House: **William John STOKER** , Martha Anne
- 1934: William John STOKER died 27th Dec 1934 aged 75.
- 1935: Martha Anne died 31s Dec 1935 at Royal Infirmary Edinburgh ("usual address Riverside") aged 73. Alfred STOKER present, The Gables, Lower Road, River, Dover.
- 1936: Conveyance of Riverside House between Alfred STOKER (Executor, Ironmonger of The Gables, Lower Road, River, Kent), Grace HEWES (Estate Owner, wife of Sidney HEWES (Mariner) of Coast Road) and Barbara Josephine BARLOW (Purchaser, 9, Berkely Square, London W1) for £275 paid to Executor and £525 paid to the Estate Owner (total £800) on 22<sup>nd</sup> June.
- 1936: Mortgage between Mrs Barlow National Provincial Bank Limited on 2<sup>nd</sup> July.
- 1937: Letter dated 9<sup>th</sup> January to Mrs BARLOW (9, Berkely Square, London W1) from Fenn, Wright & Co Valuers regarding a glowing survey of Riverside House, valued at £1200.
- 1939: Riverside House Coast Road:
- |                     |             |            |                             |
|---------------------|-------------|------------|-----------------------------|
| Margaret M Stringer | 22 Dec 1897 | Female, 42 | Proprietress Of Guest House |
| Single              |             |            |                             |
| Evelyn M Burke      | 23 Nov 1910 | Female, 29 | Unpaid Domestic Duties      |
| Married             |             |            |                             |
| Elizabeth A Burke   | 22 Aug 1937 | Female, 2  | At School                   |
| Single              |             |            |                             |
| Monica Skinner      | 26 Oct 1860 | Female, 79 | Incapacitated               |
|                     |             |            | Widowed                     |
| Camilla Skinner     | 11 Jan 1905 | Female, 34 | Private Means               |
|                     |             |            | Single                      |
- 1939: Local Search No249 on 15<sup>th</sup> August

1939: Land Charges Search No 316402/39 Searches conducted on 18<sup>th</sup> August and 5 shillings paid by STRINGER.

1939: Conveyance of Riverside House on 21<sup>st</sup> August between Barbara Josephine BARLOW (Vendor, feme sole (no husband) formerly of 9 Berkely Square, but now of 12 Ovington Street, Kensington, London) and Robert Waller WILLCOCKS (Purchaser, Physician and Surgeon of Springfield, Chelmsford) for £1300.



1944: Agreement between Robert Waller WILLCOCKS (Lender) and Margaret Millicent STRINGER (Borrower) regarding conveyance of Riverside House (purchased for £1320 by Lender as agent for Borrower) on 7<sup>th</sup> March.

1945/55: Register of Electors: Riverside House : Margaret M Stringer (48) / (58)

1978: 118 Coast Road (Riverside): Beatrice M Alexander, Kathleen D Stringer, Diana M Willcox, Irene H Willcox

## Old Victory

- 1837: Robert Gentry, occupier - Tithe map field 274 (by Victory)
- 1840: Chelmsford Chronicle 23 October 1840: Robert Gentry, a beer-shop keeper, of West Mersea, was convicted on the evidence of Wheeler, one of the rural police, for keeping his house open for the sale of beer after ten o'clock on the night of the 3<sup>rd</sup> inst. He was fined only 20s and costs 14s as it appeared to be his first offence.
- 1854: Essex Standard 29 March 1854: *The licence of the Victory was transferred from Robert Gentry to Sarah King (35)*
- 1855: Miss Sarah King, traders, Kelly's 1855
- 1858: Suffolk and Essex Free Press 15 July 1858

**COLCHESTER DIVISION, July 10.**  
 (Before T. L. Ewen, Esq., chairman, J. Bawtree, S. G. Cooke, W. R. Havens, G. E. Tompson, Esqrs., and the Rev. W. Walsh.)

**CAUTION TO BEER-HOUSE KEEPERS.**—Sarah King, of West Mersea, beer-house keeper, appeared on summons, issued at the instance of the Excise, to answer an information for selling gin without a licence.—John Clare, Esq., receiver of Inland Revenue for Essex, appeared for, and conducted the case on behalf of, the Crown.—Thomas Cook, officer of Excise, proved defendant had a licence to retail beer.—Henry John Day, of West Mersea, innkeeper, stated that he lived near the defendant, and that on the 8th of April last he went to her house, and called for a glass of gin and water, which was supplied by defendant; he had a second glass. It was brought from the cellar; he paid 1s. for it; he staid in the house twenty minutes or so. In his cross-examination by Mr. Philbrick, he stated defendant once lived in his inn, not as tenant; had not been at loggerheads, nor threatened her with a lawsuit; had said he would stop that beerhouse if he could; complained that it had been rated higher than it ought to be for the purpose of obtaining a beer-house licence; it was an injury to his house.—Witness several times appealed to the bench before answering Mr. Philbrick's questions, who contended that witness had gone to the house and obtained the gin for the purpose of these proceedings.—Mr. Philbrick argued at great length the importance of the case as affecting the defendant, should conviction follow on the unsupported evidence of Mr. Day, so interested a witness, as it would ever disqualify defendant from obtaining another licence, and thereby entail ruin on her.—The Magistrates consulted, and said they were of opinion that Sarah King was guilty of the charge set forth in the information, and they mitigated the penalty to one-fourth—viz., £12 10s.

1858: Essex Standard 16 July 1858: Sarah King, Beer-house keeper: Excise Information – County Magistrates sitting 10<sup>th</sup> July

**COUNTY MAGISTRATES' SITTING.—JULY 10.**  
 Before T. L. Ewen, Esq., chairman; J. Bawtree, Esq., S. G. Cooke, Esq., G. E. Tompson, Esq., W. R. Havens, Esq., and the Rev. W. Walsh.

**Excise Information.—Singular Case.**

Sarah King, beer-house keeper, of West Mersea, appeared to an information which had been preferred against her by an officer of Excise for selling spirits without being licensed to do so.—Mr. CLARE, Collector of Inland Revenue, appeared on behalf of the Crown; and Mr. PHILBRICK for the defendant.

Mr. CLARE said there was nothing peculiar in the circumstances of this case, but he would, in justice to the defendant, mention to the Bench that a conviction would not only involve the heavy pecuniary penalty attached to offences of this kind, but would also prevent the defendant from obtaining another license to sell beer.

An officer of Excise was then called, and stated, in reply to Mr. CLARE, that the defendant was licensed to sell beer; but Mr. PHILBRICK took objection to the reception of parole evidence of that kind was in writing. They had received no notice to produce the license, and therefore secondary evidence of its contents could not be given.

Mr. CLARE then intimated that he would procure the counterpart of the license and produce it at a subsequent period of the case.

Mr. Henry John May, oyster merchant, of West Mersea, was then called, and said on the 6th of April last he went to defendant's house and called for a glass of gin and water, which was brought to him directly, and also a second. The gin was taken from a bottle brought from the cellar, or where the beer casks were, and he paid 1s. for it. Was in the house about 20 minutes. There was no one else there. Witness was owner of a regular inn within less than a hundred yards of defendant's beer-house.

Cross-examined. Defendant formerly lived in his inn, and took her present house about three months ago; had not been at loggerheads with her since that time; had not threatened her with a law suit; had said he would put the house down if he could; that was because he believed it had been illegally rated for the purpose of making it a beer-house.

Mr. PHILBRICK. Have you not repeatedly said you would put down the house?

Witness. Am I obliged to answer that question?

The CHAIRMAN thought it was irrelevant; but Mr. PHILBRICK contended that it was necessary to show the animus of the witness.

Cross-examination continued. It was after dinner when he called upon the defendant; did not say anything when he went in

till defendant said it was no use his coming after her vote for Mr. Mason, as she should vote for Mr. Bean; that referred to an election for churchwardens; he said she might have waited till he asked her, and added "let me have a glass of gin and water;" he did go to ask her for her vote.

Mr. PHILBRICK. Now, what was your real object in asking for the gin? (Witness hesitating the question was repeated.)

Witness, hastily. Am I compelled to answer these questions?

The CHAIRMAN replied in the affirmative.

Witness. I asked for it because I wanted it I suppose; had nothing in the house besides gin; did not drink beer, but defendant did not say "as you don't drink beer I can't give you any, but you shall have some gin and water;" did not give her half-a-crown; mentioned this occurrence to the Excise officers at least six weeks ago; might have sent for defendant to his house a few days after the 6th of April; would not say what for unless the Bench said he must; well, as he must say, it was to have a settlement with her for some coals; would swear that was the true reason; did not tell defendant when he asked for the gin and water that she laid herself open to an information; did not order it for the purpose of laying this information.

The CHAIRMAN said even if he had done so what reason was there that he should not?

Mr. PHILBRICK said there was no reason in the world if the witness chose to proclaim himself as a common informer.

Witness, indignantly. I am not a common informer.

The document purporting to be the counterpart of the license was here produced, and objected to by Mr. PHILBRICK; but the Bench held that it was evidence.

Mr. PHILBRICK asked whether Mr. Clare would swear that it was a copy of the license, or that he had compared it himself?

Mr. CLARE said he would not; but he believed it to be a copy.

In the course of some discussion as to the legality of the document, the CHAIRMAN suggested that the case should be adjourned; but Mr. PHILBRICK submitted that the Crown had had ample time for getting up their case, and must stand or fall on the evidence before the Court.

It having been decided to continue the case, Mr. PHILBRICK addressed the Bench for the defence, asking them to dismiss the information on account of the objection he had taken with reference to the license.

The MAGISTRATES' CLERK said it did not appear to be necessary to show that the defendant was licensed to sell beer.

Mr. PHILBRICK said he took it to be necessary, because it was attempted to be proved by the Crown; and he therefore asked the Bench to proceed upon the rule of evidence recognised at Westminster and by all lawyers, and dismiss the case, as the evidence upon that point failed. As the Bench did not seem disposed to do so, he would direct their attention to the evidence, and ask whether, upon the testimony of a witness like the one who had been produced, they would convict the defendant? Mr. May was the only interested party, and defendant had committed the mortal sin of setting up a beer house for the purpose of getting a living within less than 100 yards of his house. They noticed the manner in which he gave his evidence, and he (Mr. Philbrick) was justified in saying that this was a malicious proceeding on his part. He had said that he did not drink beer, and that was in accordance with his instructions that the gin and water was given. If he (Mr. Philbrick) gave any one who might come into his house gin and water, and that person chose to give him a shilling for it, would they say that was a sufficient sale to come within the meaning of the Act?

Mr. CLARE. We should soon have you here. (Laughter.)

Mr. PHILBRICK said his friend would soon be glad to get rid of him again. Was it made out to the satisfaction of the Bench that this was such a sale that they could rely upon the evidence of a witness influenced by such a bad feeling as Mr. May? Mr. Philbrick then proceeded at some length to comment upon the evidence which had been adduced, contending that it was insufficient for the purposes of a conviction.

The Bench having consulted for a few moments, Mr. May was recalled by Mr. HAVENS, in answer to whose questions he said he did not ask the price of the gin and water, but when he had the second glass he laid the money and said, "there's a shilling for you." He did not ask for sixpennyworth, but for a glass of gin and water.

The Bench again consulted, after which the CHAIRMAN said the the majority of them were of opinion that the defendant was guilty of the offence charged in the information.

The penalty to which the defendant was liable was £50; but the Bench intimated that they would mitigate it to one-fourth.

Note that shortly after this Sarah King was Innkeeper at the White Hart, Mersea:

- 1861: Sarah King (42), White Hart, Innkeeper [ Census ]
- 1861: George Brand innkeeper and Patience Brand wife at Victory Public House, West Mersea. [Census]
- 1865: Essex Standard 30 June 1865: *George Brand innkeeper fine 12s for having deficient pewter mugs.*
- 1874: James Syer Smith, Kelly's 1874
- 1878: Kelly's Essex Directory 1878: George BRAND Victory & Oyster Merchant Barrow Hill Farm
- 1881: George Brand Senior Licensed Victualler [Census]  
shown on MAP\_1881\_001 at The Lane
- 1882: Kelly's 1882 Directory: Brand George, *Victory*, & oyster merchant, Barrow Hill farm
- c1890: Drawing of Victory by Francis Carruthers Gould [ MMC\_P1060C ]
- 1890: Kelly's Directory 1890: Brand George, Victory P.H. & oyster mer.

1891: George Brand Oyster Merchant and Publican [Census]  
14 Sep 1891 Will of Henry John May of Stone House.  
Includes a Public House or Beerhouse called "the Victory Inn"  
now in the occupation of George Brand situate in Mersea Lane

1894: George Brand [ Kelly's 1894 ] Brand George, Victory PH &  
oyster merchant.

From Suffolk Gazette and Eastern Counties: George BRAND (89) in  
1936 – he also died in 1936



Before 1900: An early photograph of the Victory - with only the front ridge roof.

Newspaper cutting from Essex Standard, date: 1900  
Victory Inn, West Mersea. William Trim, Proprietor.

*This inn is advantageously situated on the shores of Mersea Creek (so famous for its Native Oysters). Excellent Harbour for small Yachts, Wildfowling, Boating, Fishing &c., in the immediate vicinity. W.T. wishes to call the attention of the Public to the extensive alterations the House and Premises has undergone, for which better accommodation is now to be had for Stabling and Cyclists.*

*Trips on the water, Oyster Teas and Picnic Parties catered for.*

**VICTORY INN, WEST MERSEA,  
WILLIAM TRIM, PROPRIETOR.**

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[1340  
TRIPS ON THE WATER, OYSTER TEAS AND  
PICNIC PARTIES CATERED FOR.

1901: There is a gap in the 1901 census – enquiries on-going to see if the missing pages are available. This could explain why William Trim and family cannot be found in 1901 searches.

1903: East Anglian Daily Times 17 October 1903:

**NATIVE OYSTERS.**

**WILLIAM TRIM,**  
**THE VICTORY,**  
**WEST MERSEA, COLCHESTER,**

**I**s now prepared to supply  
**BEST NATIVE OYSTERS**  
**At 1/3 per DOZEN, carriage paid.**

**The Oysters are of excellent quality, and are  
from ground free from all contamination, as  
certified by Public Analyst.**



Before 1904: An early photograph of the old Victory - before they filled in the valley in the two roofs. Wyatt's shed is on the left.



*The valley between the ridges is now roofed over.*



F. ARTIS]

**The Victory, West Mersea.**

(No. 50)

[DEDHAM

October 1904:



c 1905 From Mersea Museum: *The writing on the front of the Inn says Colchester Brewing Co., Ales and Stout, Wines and Spirits. Proprietor W. Trim. First of all the Stoker family rented the 'old' Victory from the Brewing Company, and then bought it, dividing it in two within the family.*



Before July 1906: Victory with Cornerways on the right. Cornerways was later reduced in height.

1906: William Trim, landlord of the Victory Inn (and subsequently at the new Victory)



c1915: Brickhouse Farm, West Mersea. William Trim (left) was a threshing contractor at Mersea. The steam engine was a 'portable', i.e. it was not self-propelled and had to be pulled by a horse. The young man with cap is Horace Whiting. Teenage girl is Catherine Vince (Mrs George), born 8 Nov 1899.



Mrs Trim [née Alice Chatters] and Bill Trim outside new Victory;



John Lungley at back William right



Before 1907:

The Victory at high tide. Old City, West Mersea.



Before 1907:

The Victory, Cornerways



c1907: Inside the old Victory

Top row: ??, John MILGATE, Ernie CUDMORE, William WYATT, **Len STOKER**, ??, ??, Ernie WELLS  
Zebedee MILGATE, Louis FARTHING, **Sid STOKER**, Herbert Welham, Charlie Mussett and Bob Burgess

1907: Chelmsford Chronicle 19 April 1907: *William Trim applied for confirmation of the removal of the license of the Victory Inn, West Mersea, to premises nearer the centre of the village – Mr E Thomson Smith supported, and Mr Asher Prior opposed, the application. - Mr Thompson Smith said that the only opposition came from the tenant of the other house in the village, and that the cost of the new house would be about £1,000. Mr Prior urged that a good case had been made out why the house should be referred for compensation, but not for removing it. – The Chairman said the Committee thought there should be a surrender in this case which would be deferred until the 26th.*

1907: Chelmsford Chronicle 03 May 1907: *The confirmation of the removal of the licence of the Victory Inn, West Mersea to premises nearer to the centre of the village, again came before the committee, who at the last meeting agreed that there should be a surrender in this case.*

1907: 24<sup>th</sup> August Press Visit



1908: Evening Star 02 May 1908: *At Lexden and Winstree Sessions Mr E. Thompson Smith, solicitor, applied for a final transfer of the licence of the Victory, West Mersea, to new premises in the same parish – The application was granted.*

1911: The Old Victory: Alfred John Cudmore (Fisherman, 62), Mary Ann Cudmore (54), Ella Kate (26), Ernie Alfred (Brick layer, 24), Grace Anna (19), Violet May (16)

1917: The Old Victory: Grace Annie Cudmore marriage to Sidney Stoker

1918: Absent Voter list: The Old Victory, Sidney Stoker

1926: Alfred Cudmore died age 78



c1920: Fred Smith's bakers cart down the 'City End' by the old Victory. John Woods just visible on the left. William Wyatt with brushes. Miss Smith and Miss Bagworth (Mrs Eddie Smith) Preston Smith.



1920s

Wyatt's Shed, and the old Victory pub. Thought to be 1920s.



Old Victory, Cornerways, John Hewes Cottage and Alice Hewes Cottage. The wooden shed to the right was used by the Sheldrick Family, i.e. wife of John Hewes. It was later used as an extra room to accommodate Joan Vinson née Hewes who contracted TB and was used to isolate her from the rest of the family



Old City, West Mersea. Victory pub.



Cigarette and sweet shop on far right owned by John Hewes and then run by Alice Hewes



Alice HEWES (ran the sweet shop near Old Vic)

1921: Electoral Register: Alfred John Cudmore (72), Mary Ann Cudmore(64), Leonard William Stoker, Sidney Stoker, Edward Wyatt.

1931: Electoral Register: Mary Ann Cudmore, Leonard William & Florence Louisa Stoker, Sidney & Grace Stoker

1936: Electoral Register: Mary Ann Cudmore, Florence Louisa Stoker, Sidney & Grace Stoker

1939 West Mersea, The Old Victory, The Lane: Sidney Stoker (Carpenter, 46), Grace (47) and Joyce (19), Mary A Cudmore (widow , 85), Ernest A Cudmore (53)

1945: Florence Louisa Stoker, Christina Cothill, Ernest A Cudmore, Mary A Cudmore, Mabel T Hanbury, Joyce B Keene, Sidney & Grace A Stoker,



c1930: View to Coast Road. Rose Cottage (centre), Sid Hewes shop (right).



Before 1953: Coast Road – Old Victory

1955: Harry A Keene, Joyce B Keene, George Owen, Florence L Stoker, Sidney & Grace A Stoker

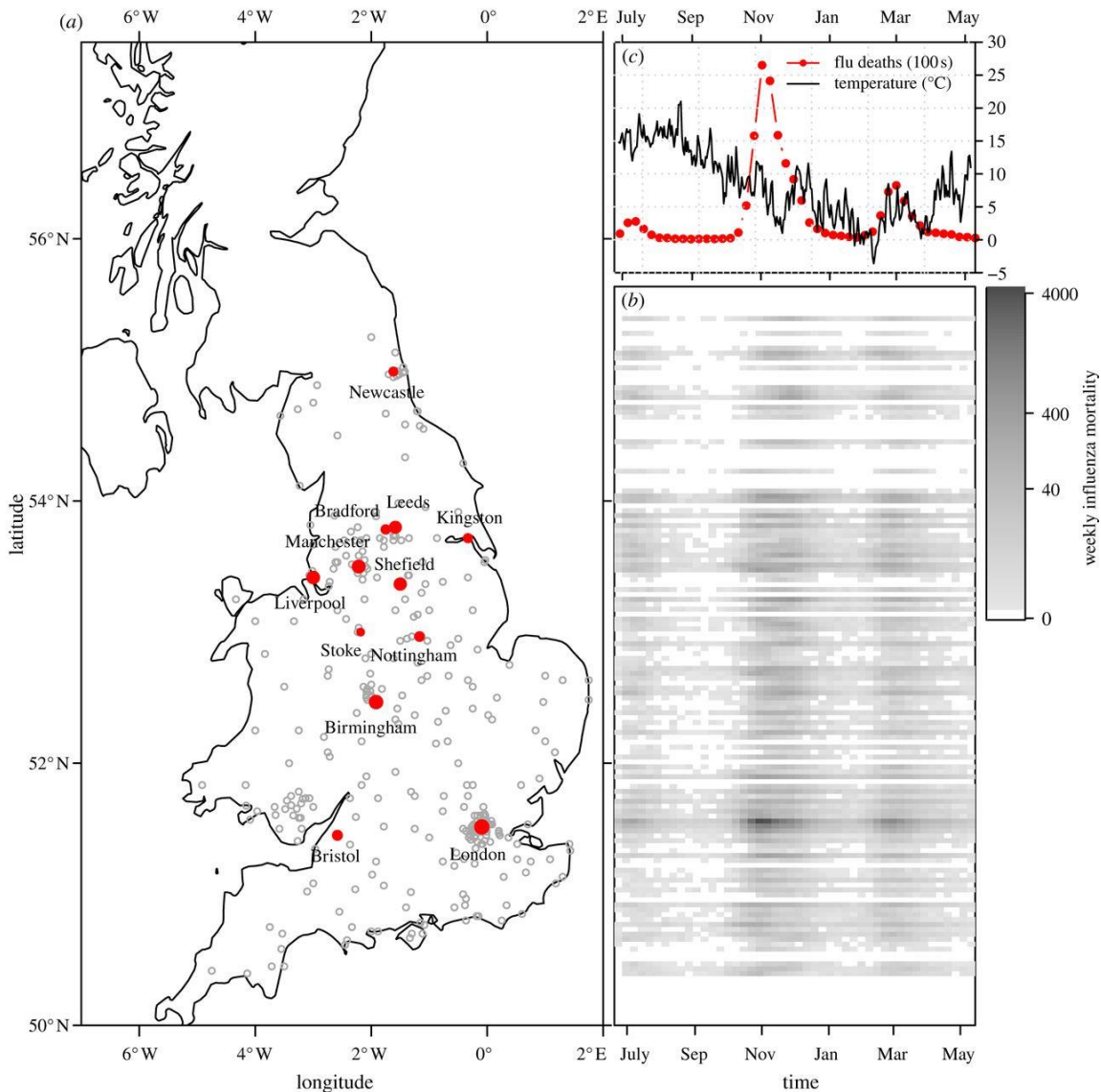
1968: West Mersea House numbering, transcribed from West Mersea Urban District documents

Old Victory, Mrs F L Stoker 142 Coast Road, Sidney Stoker 140 Coast Road

## Appendix A

### 1918 Influenza Pandemic

The 1918 influenza pandemic was the deadliest pandemic in history. An estimated 50–100 million people were killed worldwide, and one-third of the world's population is estimated to have been infected. The incidence of influenza and the resultant mortality exhibited multiple waves during the 1918 pandemic, with many regions experiencing up to three peaks in mortality. Figure below shows the pattern of mortality in the UK during the 12 month period beginning in June 1918; three distinct waves are evident throughout the country during this single year.



(a); the largest 12 cities are identified by name and with solid (red) dots (the size of which indicate the population size rank of the city). The intensity plot (b) shows the spatio-temporal pattern of the pandemic throughout the country (which are divided into 150 latitudinal bins). Panel (c) on the top right shows the daily central England temperature (CET in °C) and weekly influenza mortality in **London** (in hundreds).

Note that the peak mortality in London was at beginning of Nov 1918, and Alfred STOKER was discharged from the RAF in 14<sup>th</sup> Nov. It is therefore quite likely that Alfred contracted influenza. Also Jill noted that Sidney's son Ernest STOKER died of influenza (third quarter of 1918).

### **Deadly second wave**

The second wave of the 1918 pandemic was much deadlier than the first. The first wave had resembled typical flu epidemics; those most at risk were the sick and elderly, while younger, healthier people recovered easily. But in August, when the second wave began in France, Sierra Leone and the United States, the virus had mutated to a much deadlier form. As the American Experience Influenza 1918 episode says, October 1918 was the deadliest month of the whole pandemic.

This increased severity has been attributed to the circumstances of the First World War. In civilian life, natural selection favours a mild strain. Those who get very ill stay home, and those mildly ill continue with their lives, preferentially spreading the mild strain. In the trenches, natural selection was reversed. Soldiers with a mild strain stayed where they were, while the severely ill were sent on crowded trains to crowded field hospitals, spreading the deadlier virus. The second wave began and the flu quickly spread around the world again.