

197 HIGH STREET (BETWEEN THE WARS)

I mentioned in an earlier article that the Elliott family had moved into 3 Market Cottages (197 High Street) by 1914, with Fred Elliott listed in the electoral registers from 1914¹ until he died in 1918².

He had apparently enlisted in the army on the 14th August 1916³ at the age of 50 years and 6 months, his papers noting that he had previously served with the 42nd Battalion, Manchester Regiment for sixteen years - joining on the 17th October 1887; serving in India between the 20th September 1889 and 20th November 1895; and then in South Africa between the 16th March and 15th August 1900; before leaving the service on the 6th October 1903.

This photograph, taken at the top of Anchor Hill, Knaphill, is thought to be of the local celebrations following the 'Relief of Mafeking' during the Second Boer War in South Africa, where Fred Elliott was serving.



During the First World War he served as a private in the Royal Defence Corp – his discharge papers noting that his military character was 'very good' and that 'this man is steady and well conducted'.

At the time of the 1911 census⁴ the family had been living at 9 Walton Terrace (and before that, in 1901⁵, at what was then called 'Westfield Square' – now Rosebank Cottages), with Fred at that stage a farm labourer (by 1914 he was a gardener), married to Emily (39) for fifteen years and having seven children.

Both Fred and Emily came originally from Storrington in Sussex, where their eldest son, Frederick James Charman (17) was also born – his trade being listed in the 1911 census as a 'fish and greengrocer'.

All the other children were born in Woking – Lizzie (14), Thomas Alfred (12), William Arthur (11), Harry (9), James (6) and Kate (2), but it seems there may also have been an eighth child as at the bottom is written the words 'baby Elliott, son' but crossed through.

In October 1917, William (who would then be about 17), was summoned before the magistrates for 'cycling without a light' and was fined 5s⁶.

In 1918⁷ Emily was eligible to vote, with her sons William Arthur and Thomas Alfred joining her here in the spring of 1920⁸, along with a Henry Sharp (a lodger?) who continued to be listed in the electoral registers at 197 High Street until 1927⁹.

¹ SHC CC802/25/4

² SHC CC802/27/4 – he died on the 3rd November 1918

³ TNA WO364/1124

⁴ TNA RG14/3031/54

⁵ TNA RG13/597/43/9

⁶ Surrey Advertiser, Wednesday 24th October 1917, page 3

⁷ SHC CC802/27/4

⁸ SHC CC802/30/4

⁹ SHC CC802/44/4

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Henry Elliott was also registered at the property between the autumn 1923¹⁰ and the autumn 1926¹¹, with Thomas Alfred leaving in the autumn of 1925¹² and William Arthur in 1928¹³.

Henry Ernest Elliott returned to the electoral registers in 1929¹⁴ along with his wife Sybil Matilda, but 1933¹⁵ was their last year listed at 197 High Street, Albert Elliott and his wife Ellen taking over in 1934¹⁶. I should also have mentioned that Emily apparently moved out of 197 High Street in 1930¹⁷, and that between 1930 and 1933¹⁸ a Mary Ann Allen was listed at the house – although what her relationship with the family (if any) I have so far been unable to ascertain.

According to the National Register, compiled in 1939, Albert was born on the 24th April 1904 and worked as a dredger worker at a sand and ballast quarry, whilst Ellen (born 26th February 1904) performed 'unpaid domestic duties'. They apparently had five children, Albert James (born 1st September 1930), Alfred J (born 11th April 1934), Ronald W (born 30th April 1935), William G (born 7th May 1936) and Margaret J (born 29th October 1937).

Sadly, earlier that year another son, nine-week old Frederick Tony Elliott, was found dead in the bed he had been sharing with his parents – the cause of death being recorded as 'broncho-pneumonia'¹⁹ – the pathologist noting that 'in that condition the child would want all the air possible, and sleeping between his parents they boy did not have the best chance'.

Albert to the coroner 'the child was in normal health, but on Saturday morning had a slight cold' (colds having gone through the family) and that on Sunday morning when he took his wife a cup of tea 'they found the child did not stir, and they discovered that he was dead'. It had been their practice that all their children had slept with them at that age.

Tragedy struck again the following year when four-year old William George, was killed by a lorry. Apparently he, his brothers and a cousin were supposed to be going to his aunt's house a couple of doors away, but the children were instead playing in Church Street and when the others chased William George across the road he was hit by the lorry²⁰

The Aunt was Rose Elliott at No 201 High Street, but which of her many children William George and his brothers were playing with, I have not been able to work out.

It is probably also worth pointing out that young William George also had another aunt and uncle in the Market Cottages at that time – Emory and Sarah Elliott, who as we shall see later originally lived at No 7 Market Cottages (205), before moving to 207 High Street (8 Market Cottages) just before the First World War.



¹⁰ SHC CC802/37/4

¹¹ SHC CC802/42/4

¹² SHC CC802/41/4

¹³ SHC CC802/45/4

¹⁴ SHC CC802/46/4

¹⁵ SHC CC802/50/4

¹⁶ SHC CC802/51/4

¹⁷ SHC CC802/47/4

¹⁸ SHC CC802/50/4

¹⁹ Surrey Advertiser, Saturday 11th March 1939, page 10.

²⁰ Surrey Advertiser, Saturday 28th December 1940, page 3