

From: John Kelly <bennettscottage@gmail.com>
Subject: Bennetts Cottage - History
Date: 6 August 2014 19:06:02 GMT+01:00
To: aircallister@btconnect.com

1 Attachment, 41 KB

Dear Angela,

1940s

The attached photo of Bennetts Cottage was given to me by one of Fred Symes' 5 siblings. They, along with Mrs Symes, were evacuated from Portsmouth to Martin in 1940. Fred has told me that Martin was without electricity until 1943. The photo therefore seems to have been taken sometime between 1940 and 1943 as there appear to be no overhead power lines running to the house. Mr. Symes, who worked in Portsmouth dockyard, came to see his family in Bennetts Cottage the weekend after their arrival. He then returned by train to Portsmouth from Salisbury where he was killed in an air raid while walking from Portsmouth Harbour Station to the dockyard.

Bennetts Cottage was then a "two up, two down" farm labourer's cottage with a single storey corrugated iron roof extension. The latter contained a copper boiler which provided hot water for their weekly bath in a galvanised bath placed on the living room floor.

24th June 1913

Thomas Street, a farmer of Gussage St Andrew Farnham Dorset and owner of what is now known as Bennetts Cottage in Martin, decided to lease the latter to Mrs Ada Clara Ayles for 70 years (until 24th June 1983) on a rent of one peppercorn per annum. Ada Clara Ayles was the daughter of a Mr and Mrs Bennett. Ada died in 1956 in her 100th year. She is buried with her parents at All Saints Martin under a gravestone beneath the yew tree situated immediately on the left on entering the graveyard from the car park. I understand she never remarried and think she probably decided to revert to her maiden name, Ada Clara Bennett (**ACB**), after returning to Martin where her parents, who later died in the 1930s, already resided. This probably explains why the house became to be known as 'Bennetts Cottage' (**BC**).

The Deeds do not reveal why Thomas Street decided to offer **ACB** a 70 year lease on such generous terms. Perhaps **ACB's** deceased husband Mr. Ayles had worked for Mr Street? Or maybe **ACB's** mother Mrs Bennett was related to Mr Street in some way, being his sister perhaps? We cannot be certain, but the Deeds do suggest that Thomas Street was a man of means. He owned at least 2 other properties in Martin including 'High Bank'.

13th November 1923

Thomas Street, by now living at Handley House, Sixpenny Handley, dies leaving his estate to his son Thomas Edward Street of Anerley, Surrey and his 2 daughters Elizabeth Ellen Street and Amy Amelia Street both of Handley House, Sixpenny Handley.

5th October 1938

Thomas Edward Street and his 2 sisters extend **ACB's** peppercorn lease of **BC**, from the original 70 years, to last throughout her lifetime.

1940

HMG requisitions **BC** which is unoccupied. Mrs Symes with her 6 children move in. **ACB** born in 1856 would have been 84 and probably living with relatives or in care.

16th April 1942

Elizabeth Ellen Street marries James Edward Ray

26th March 1948

Thomas Edward Street dies intestate at 188 Selhurst Road South Norwood Surrey.

13th May 1948

Principal Probate Registry grants Eric Thomas Street foreman electrician in Cardigan (most probably the son of Thomas Edward Street) the right to administer Thomas Edward Street's estate in the absence of a will.

22nd July 1948

Eric Thomas Street transfers his right to administer that part of Thomas Edward Street's estate which resides in Martin to Elizabeth Ellen Ray (formerly Street) and Amy Amelia Street.

15th February 1954 **ACB** gives her Power of Attorney to Jacksons Solicitors.

8th October 1954 **ACB** aged 98, now living at Oaklands Ringwood Road Ferndown, surrenders her right to live in **BC** on a peppercorn rent for her lifetime.

10th January 1955 Elizabeth Ellen Ray and Amy Amelia Street sell **BC** to Beaver Properties.

14th February 1955 Planning permission granted to build garage and third living room with bedroom above at **BC**

sometime in 1956 exact date on gravestone **ACB** dies in her 100th year.

11th April 1956 Beaver Properties sell extended **BC** to Mrs Francis Ethel Rosamond Staveley, aunt of the late Admiral Sir William David Minet Staveley a former First Sea Lord. Admiral Staveley was my House Officer as a Lieutenant when I joined BRNC Dartmouth as a Cadet in 1956. He later commanded HMS INTREPID on flood relief operations in the East Pakistan/Ganges Delta as a Captain in 1970. I was the CO of the helicopter squadron embarked in INTREPID at the time. I mentioned to Captain Staveley that I hoped to buy a house somewhere between Salisbury and Ringwood after Sue and I eventually returned to UK. Captain Staveley replied that he 'had an ancient aunt living in that area who probably wouldn't last much longer'