

## *Storey Family Notes*

Here you will find a miscellany of Storey family members, their acquaintances, and some of the places and events that they have seen, all of which have been brought to life as a result of sifting through old photographs.

# **Boldmere**

## **(Bird's the Bakers and Confectioners)**

by

Jillian Storey

See also *Storey Family Notes, New Oscott*  
and *Storey Family Notes, Wylde Green*

January, 2023

### **A brief history of Birds the Bakers & Confectioners of 384 Boldmere Road Sutton Coldfield**

The first baker in my family was Mary Ann Nutt who had a Bakers shop at **130 High Street Erdington**. She started the business in 1875 at Easy Row Erdington, with her friend Harriet Matthews, after they left domestic service. Mary Ann kindly took in my Great Grand Mother Alice Louisa Shaw and her two of her sisters, on the incredibly sad death of her mother Ellen Louisa Shaw, aged 41.

Ellen Louisa Shaw had thirteen children with her husband Joseph Shaw a chain maker and furnaceman, they lived in Oldbury. It appears from a newspaper article that she starved to death in 1881, aged 40, possibly due to her husband drinking his earnings. This meant that the children had to go and live with relatives, and this is how my great grandmother Alice became a baker and moved to Erdington.

Alice Shaw along with her sisters are all listed in the 1891 census as assistants to the Baker. When Alice Louisa Shaw married Edwin James Bird in 1895, he changed profession to become a baker. He was an ornamental lead worker by trade, working on houses such as Castle Bromwich Hall and Great Barr Hall. The Bird family originated from the Malvern area.

When they married, they moved to a rented small shop at **1 Sheffield Road, Boldmere**, Sutton Coldfield. It had a small bakery at the rear and a shop at the front of the house.

Squires the builders started to build a row of shops at the end of Boldmere Road, Ellen and Edwin commissioned the builders to build one as a bakery, with a shop at the front, home above and stables at the rear. They moved into **384 Boldmere Road** approximately 1900. They had a big delivery round covering Sutton Coldfield and surrounding villages. Deliveries were initially by horse and cart and in later years by motor van.

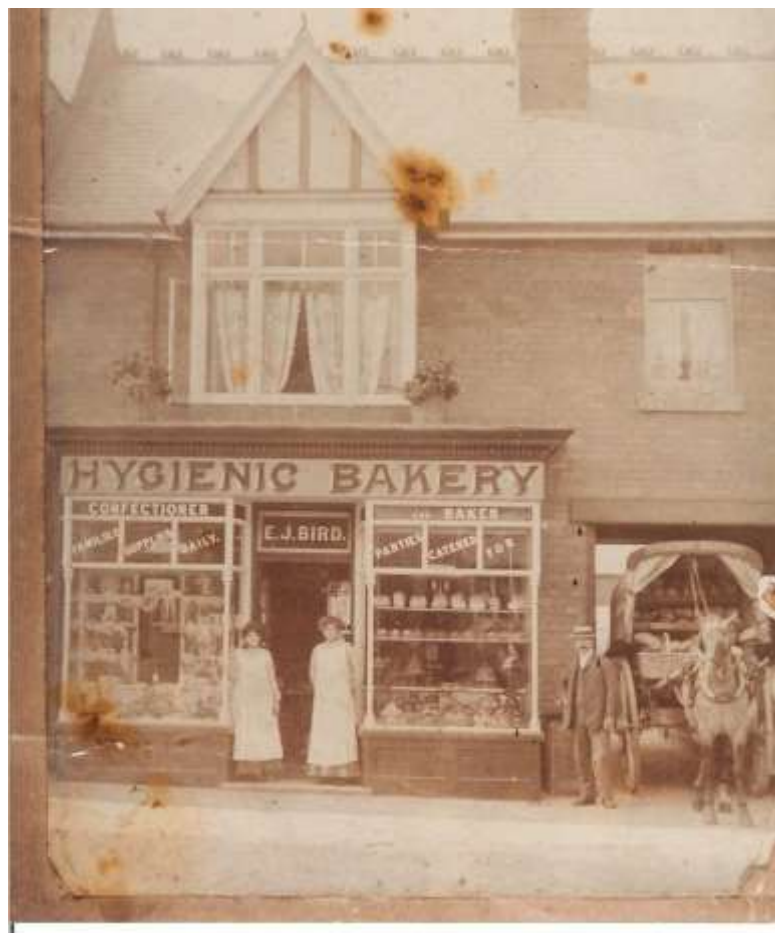


*E J Bird [lhs] and WJ Bird [rhs] holding the horse*

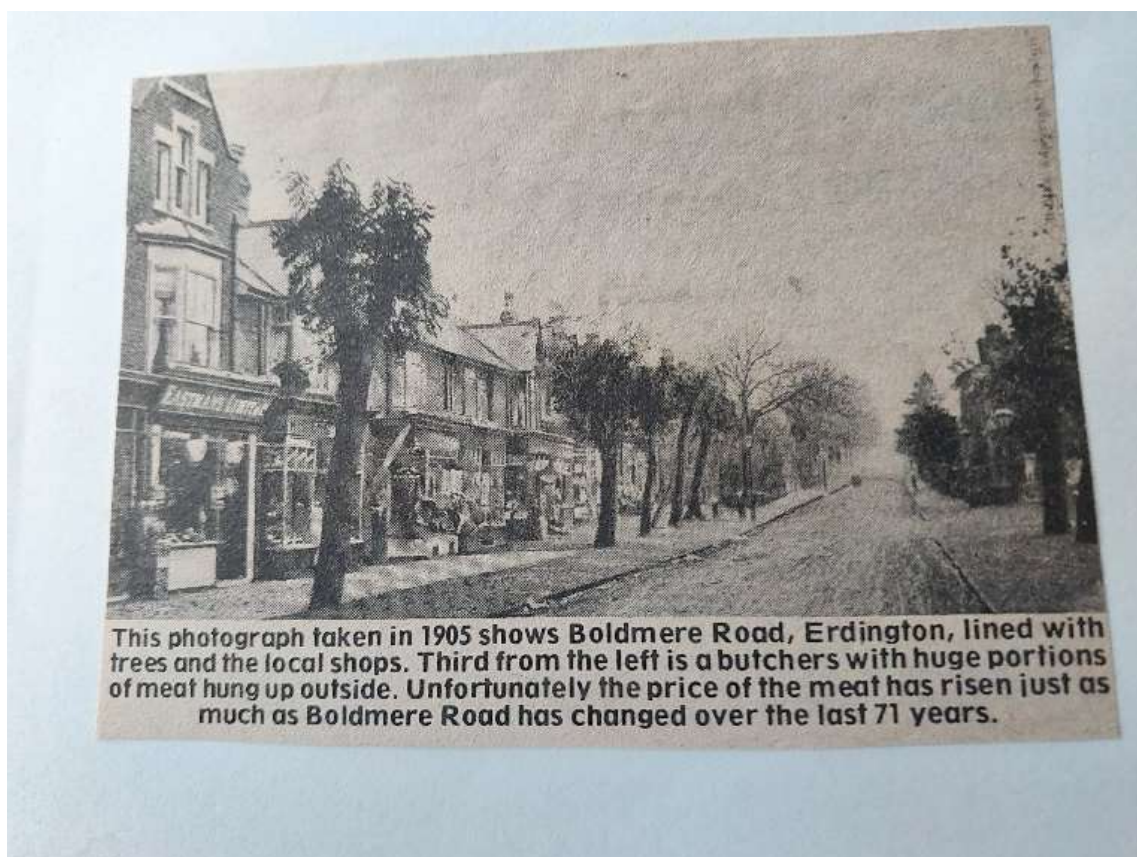
*approx. 1900*



*Tom Smalley delivery man about 1905*



*Two bakery serving staff in the doorway and EJ Bird on the (lhs) about 1902.*



Picture from the Sutton News, the bakery is the second shop on the left and Smarts the butchers is next door.

Alice and Edwin moved around the corner to 431 Chester Road on the marriage of his eldest son Walter James Bird. Walter served with the Royal Warwickshire Regiment throughout the whole of WW1 and returned home unscathed! Walter married Ethel Victoria Lissaman in 1923 and they took over the running of the Bakery and Confectioners. Before her marriage Ethel worked for E W Beston of Fernwood Grange Sutton Coldfield who appears to have been a very colourful and intriguing Birmingham character? But that's another story!





*WJ Bird and his sister-in-law Violet Evelyn Lissaman*

*approx. 1923*



*EV Bird (lhs) and her sister Violet Evelyn Lissaman*

*approx. 1923*

My father Brian John Bird was born at the shop, 384 Boldmere Road, in 1926 and remembers how cold it was in his bedroom in winter with frost on the inside of the windows. His room was over the entry to the rear of the shop, access for the horses and deliveries.

My father remembered his father Walter cooking all the neighbours' turkeys for them on Christmas Day in the big bread ovens. Mr Smarts the butchers shop was next door and Harry Parrott a house decorator and paper hanger was at 388 Boldmere Road. This gave my father an interesting place to grow up and explore. They had many outdoor cats to control the mice, two had memorable names of Playbox and Bogie. My father talked of his dad Walter, pumping the church organ at St Michaels Church for a few pennies on a Sunday when he was a boy.



Smarts butchers is now Allsops, you can see the decorations for the coronation in 1953.



*Approx. 1960's*

My father Brian took over the business in 1964 when Walter died suddenly. He was incredibly sad to close the business in 1968 and to sell the shop in 1969. Bread purchasing habits had changed as there was no longer the same market for freshly delivered handmade bread.



18, Bonsall Rd.,  
Edlington,  
Birmingham 23  
March 1968

Dear Mrs Bird

I should be very pleased if you would accept one of these small gifts from me in appreciation of all your kindness to me over quite a few years, & I wonder if you would please hand one each to your three assistants, but I do not know any of their names, so will you please excuse my description of them - the two tall young Ladies (I know one is dark) & the small fair one, with my many thanks to them all for their kindness, as all your staff have always been so pleasant & helpful to me.

I shall miss you all very much indeed.

Wishing you all a very happy future.

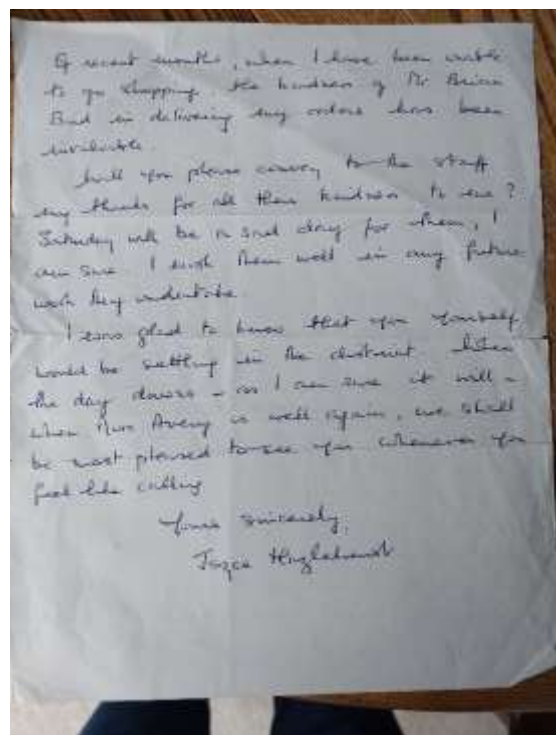
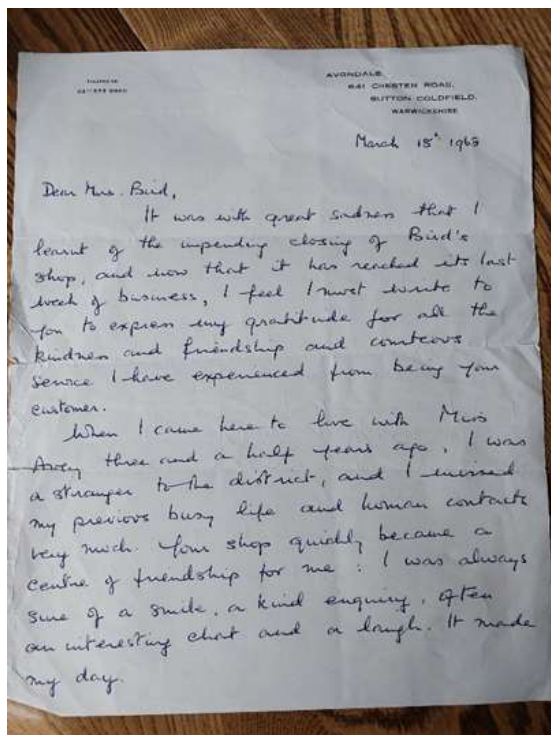
Yours very Sincerely,

Amy Griffiths

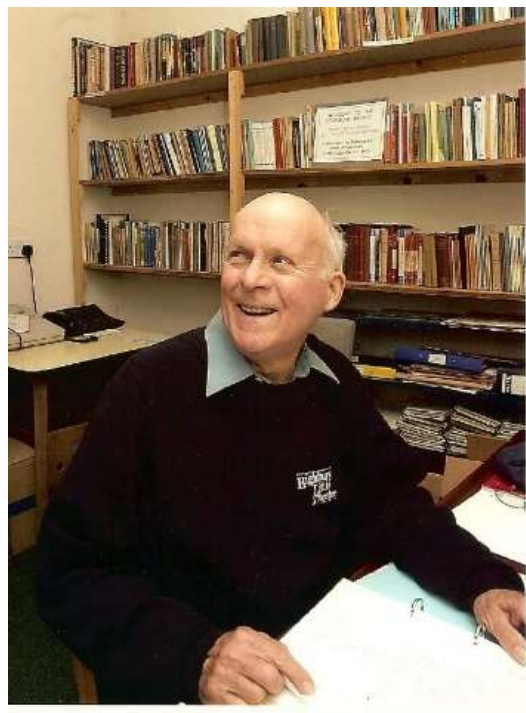
answered

Here are a couple of the lovely letters written to my grandmother Ethel Bird when the customers heard the shop was closing.





My father never moved out of Boldmere, living the rest of his life in Darnick Road. He was very active in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wylde Green Scout group as a young man, helping with the 1957 World Jamboree in Sutton Park. Also a young man he helped to build Highbury Little Theatre in Sheffield Road. Brian was delighted in later life to become the theatres, President. He died on 12.11.2022 and Brian is buried in Boldmere Church yard along with the rest of the family.





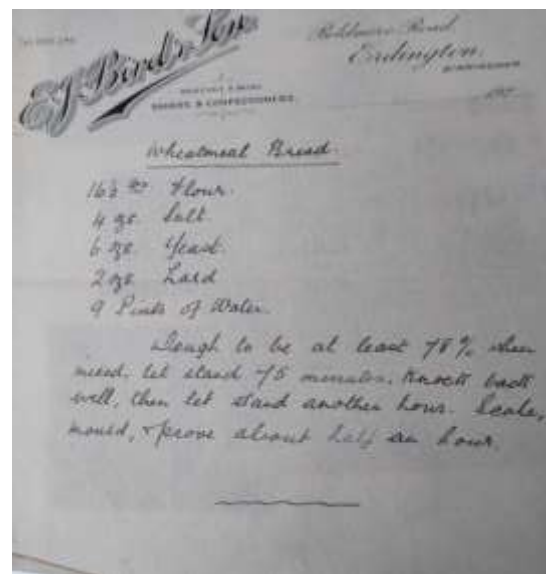
Paper cake case



Advert



Paper bag



Headed letter paper with the start of a bread recipe



Wedding Cake, my dad made me one that just looked like this.



Bill from Harry Parrot at 388 Boldmere Road

Some of the bakery equipment was donated to the National Trust, some of the equipment such as cake tins, rolling pins etc. went to Sudbury Hall and a flour sifting machine to Cothele in Cornwall.

Written by Jillian Storey, daughter of Brian Bird 16.1.2023