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HENRY JOSEPH HARDY

Born 23rd April 1873 at Godstone, Surrey, Henry Joseph Hardy was son of Peter and Emily Jane. They were 'Master' and 'Mistress' at the National School, Godstone where young Henry Joseph was also a pupil.

He grew up to be a tall elegant and very active man with an entrepreneurial mind – he was, it seems, into any number of businesses and social pursuits. In this respect he followed in his father's footsteps as Peter was also an active man in the Godstone community as well as Master of the school.



The young Henry Joseph became apprenticed to Mr Harris at Lullenden Farm, Saxby's Lane and eventually became a master saddler and harness maker. He stayed at Saxby's until his marriage to Sarah Elizabeth Smith on 30th March 1897 at St Lawrence's Church, Lewisham, South London.

It is highly likely that they moved to 'Walsall House', Godstone Road, shortly after their marriage and set up their first business there. Henry Joseph was not only concerned with the leather trade. A postcard of circa 1915 shows the shop providing a plethora of everyday goods and many activities and services quite unconnected with the harness and saddler trade were being offered.

Henry Joseph and Sarah were selling –

Brooms, brushes, mops and pails, 'Blackit' and 'Brownit' boot polish, lamp oil, cottons and glasses, dustbins, pet food and pet supplies.



He was also advertising shipping services – 'parcels shipped abroad' – and railway tickets. These services were advertised on the shopfront and in the Parish magazine.

Around 1918/1919 Henry Joseph seems to have handed over the shop business to Sidney Herbert Ellis who married his daughter, Sarah Emily, known as Cissy, on 6th April 1920.

At this time, Henry Joseph was also advertising a business at Station Road, Oxted. His activities included sending Marconigrams, Cablegrams, Telegrams, phone to P.O., and also Shipping Agent, Tourist and Insurance Agent and Colonial and Foreign Money Exchanged – and passages booked for all companies to all parts. In 1922 he lists the business as "Established 25 years". Printed on a postcard dated 2nd August 1920 there is advertising material for H J Hardy, Shipping, Colonial Railway & Tourist Agency, 'Walsall House', under Licence of H.M. Board of Trade.

Henry Joseph was also involved in village activities. He was secretary of the 1902 Coronation Celebrations committee and served on the committee for that of 1911. His invoice to the committee for supplies for the festivities is headed 'Saddlery and

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Harness Manufacturer' and also Trunks and Fancy Leather Goods Maker, Athletic Outfitter, Ironmonger, Cutler, General Merchant. He was also Church Warden and sang in the choir, having a fine baritone voice.

There is anecdotal material which suggests that Henry Joseph left his family and Lingfield in the late 1920s and his wife, Sarah Elizabeth moved to Dormansland. The reasons for this are still to be investigated. What is known is that he worked as a clerk for the Council, possibly in Leatherhead and died aged 62 in Kingston upon Thames.

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Sources:

Parish magazines

Coronation Celebration records from Lingfield Parish Council

Surrey Mirror

East Grinstead Observer

East Grinstead Courier