

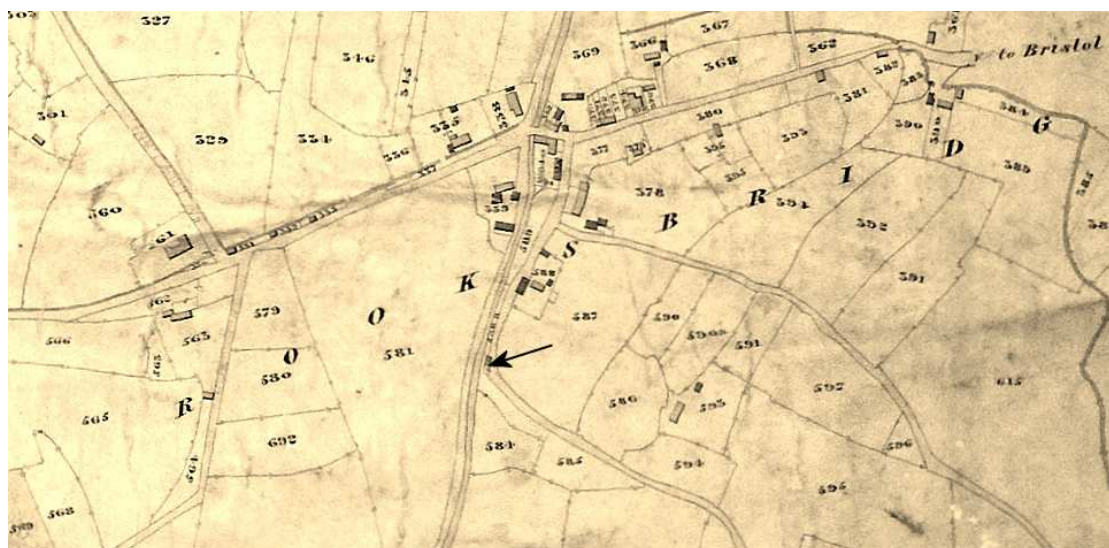
The Sandfords at Riverside, Rooksbridge

From Information kindly supplied by Helen Batt nee Boswell and Kathleen Smith nee Sandford



'Riverside Cottage' is situated on a bend in Gills Lane, Rooksbridge next to the Mark-Yeo river as it passes through the village.

The cottage at Lot 584a according to the '1840 Tithe map apportionments' was owned by an Isaac BOLEY and occupied by a Richard BROWN born Biddisham 1793.



In 1851 at Riverside, Richard BROWN was a 58 yr old ex-army Chelsea pensioner living with his wife Ruth 54 Laundress, son Edward 22 farm labourer, and daughter Amelia 16.

Edward was born in Biddisham and Amelia was born in East Brent in 1834 So the Brown family must have moved from Biddisham to Riverside sometime between 1829 and 1834?

In 1861, 68 year old Richard and son Edward 32 are still at the cottage. Both are listed as farm labourers. One assumes that Richard may have been a widower by then and his daughter Amelia married or living away?

Thomas SANDFORD 1866-1940

Born at Rooksbridge the son of James Sandford from Stoke St Gregory and Mary Ann from Mark Som.



Riverside, Rooksbridge was bought around c.1891 by Thomas Sandford, (known in the family as Granfer Sandford).... probably around the time he married Elizabeth Ann Cressy from London.

Thomas was the first of the SANDFORD family to become a land and home owner.

Described variously as a Farm Labourer, Hawker, And pig jobber etc. He at one time led a gang of unemployed men who maintained the ditches and rhynes on the levels in the area.

This was part of a work creation programme set up to keep unemployed men busy.



Thomas SANDFORD is seen here 4th from the right with his rhyne clearing team.

Thomas sold Riverside to his son Leonard and bought and retired to Heathgates, Gills Lane, Rooksbridge. He lived there until his death, and although he married twice more, he fathered no more children. After Thomas died, his eldest daughter Agnes bought 'Heathgates' intending to eventually retire there. Thomas's third wife Doris rented 'Heathgates' from Agnes until about 1946-57?

Thomas's first wife Elizabeth born in Sherbourne 1868, She gave birth to 11 children, but only 7 survived to adulthood. (*The 1911 census return gives 14 born and 8 living in 1911*)?

They were:-

Agnes SANDFORD,

Born 18.9.1892, who lived to be 94. She died in 1986.. She never married and spent her whole working life in service.

Agnes for many years worked as a servant to a Mrs Bolton at Sidcot.

After her father Thomas's death Agnes bought Heathgates, as an investment and somewhere to live on her retirement. But she never lived in it!

From about 1940 Freddie Lawrence was the tenant, until Agnes sold 'Heathgates' to him in the mid 1970's Agnes was given a small flat on the Bournville Estate in Weston. where she was happy to be near her niece Sylvie who was the nearest thing she had to a daughter.



Reginald SANDFORD. Born 19.11.1893, died 6.10.1894 at 11 months old.

Reginald SANDFORD born 15.11.1896, died 14.3.1897 at only 4 months.
Both sons named Reginald died in infancy.

(When Herbert George was born in 1904, Granfer had wanted to name him 'Reginald' but the vicar pleaded with him to choose a different name, as the first two Reginalds had not survived).

Annie SANDFORD,

Born 3.4.1895, died in her 90s. Married Harold Atherton from Congresbury in c: 1920?
They had a daughter Joyce who married a John Warren.

Annie is seen here beside Joyce at her wedding.



Annie was a VAD nurse during WW1 at Ashcombe House Army emergency hospital

Bessie SANDFORD



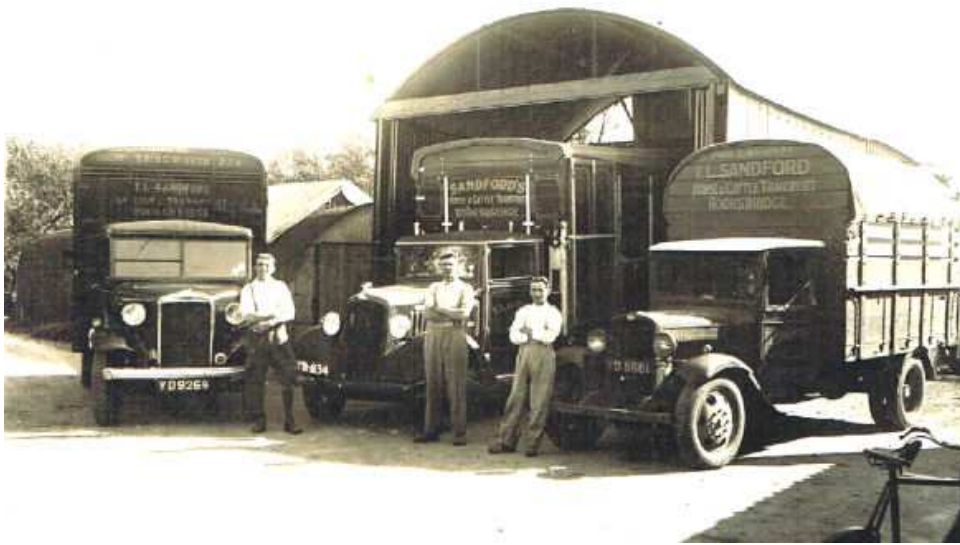
Bessie, born 25.1.1898, lived to be 106. She married Arthur Day, a baker in Bristol in 1923. They had 3 daughters. Bessie was considered a great beauty.

Daughter Esme still lives at Draycott. (2014)

Arthur was born in Weston Super Mare in 1895. In 1911 he was a trainee baker living in Ashcombe Rd WSM.

In WW1, Private Arthur Day. No 14649 Bristol Battalion of the Gloucester Regiment, fought in Italy and France and was awarded the 1914-15 star, British and Victory medals.?

Thomas (Len) SANDFORD



Left: Rowland Ham. Centre: Len Sandford. Right Dennis Sandiford.

Thomas Leonard, born 3.1.1900, died 23.12.1959, Always called "Len" or Leonard,

He bought 'Riverside' from his father Thomas around 1924.

Len had a lorry and ran a coal business from Riverside. He collected the coal from Lympsham Wharf and Brent Knoll station, and delivered it to customers or sold it from Riverside. He gave up the coal business because of bad debts, bought three cattle trucks and proceeded to run a haulage business from Riverside.

He employed Rowland Ham as a driver; Rowland had married Len's sister Dolly, and they lived in the new Council Houses at Edingworth. Until Rowland bought the business from Len.

Len married Lottie Major in 1924 and they had 4 children, all born at Riverside. Len and Lottie Sandford's children were...

Phyllis Elizabeth born 23.1.1925 – married Charles Boswell 7.4.1947, grew strawberries in Cheddar till 1993. Now lives with her son in East Huntspill

Thomas born 6.12.1927, died winter 1978. Married Dorothy Tozer 1949ish

James born 1929, never married.
Went to Canada to be a cowboy and
drowned in a swimming accident in
1951



Kathleen May, born 6.1.1932. Married Reuben Smith 1975, and still
lives in Cheddar. Grew strawberries at Cross, where they also ran a
small mixed farm at Wavering Down.



The four children were brought up at
Riverside and enjoyed an idyllic childhood
there. They had a raft on the river, fished
for eels they didn't eat; Lottie kept ducks,
and they ate the eggs and the ducks; Lottie
had a large vegetable garden which fed
them all, and she kept a Jersey cow for
milk, cream and butter.

The Jersey cow had to be put to the bull to
keep the milk coming, and Lottie sold a calf
for more that she had paid for the mother;
she started weaning calves and selling
them on, and set up a flourishing business.

Lottie Sandford and grand-daughter Helen.

Len decided to go out of haulage and into farming, and sold Riverside to his
Brother in law Rowland Ham in 1943. Len rescinded two of the haulage
licences, and gave the third to Roland – a very generous gift at the time.
Rowland continued to run the haulage business from Riverside but with only
one lorry; he employed Harold Pople from Huntspill to drive it.

Rowland built a big pigsty at Riverside, to the left of the house looking at it,
and reared pigs there for some years to supplement the family income.

Len Sandford bought Nye Farm at Hewish, and subsequently the Copse at Bleadon. After Leonard died his wife Lottie sold the land at Bleadon to Weston jeweller John Rossiter who subsequently built an imposing residence on it. And she went to live with her daughter Kathleen at Wavering Down Farm at Cross Nr Axbridge.

Clifford born 23.12.1901. Married Kitty, had 1 son, Colin. Died in the 1960s?



Dorothy Rose (Dolly) born 24.8.1903, married Roland Ham, had one daughter, Jessie.



Rowland Edward Ham Rooksbridge served in Royal Horse Artillery in France in WW1. He gave his age as 19 when volunteering in Feb 1915. He was transferred to the Army Service Corps (Horse Transport) in May 1917.



Rowland and Dolly's daughter Jessie Ham married Sam Cox, a farmer from St Georges, Worle.

Most of the family land has now been built on, and Sam and Jessie were very comfortably off. Their son Brian still farms at Worle.

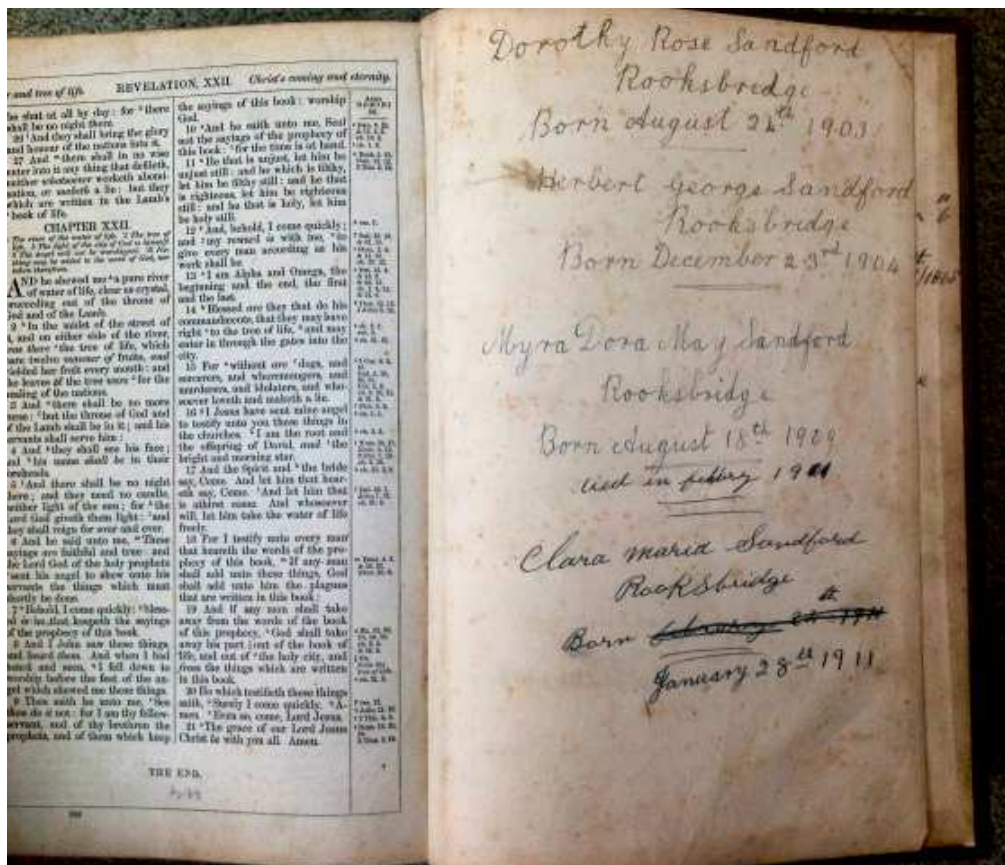
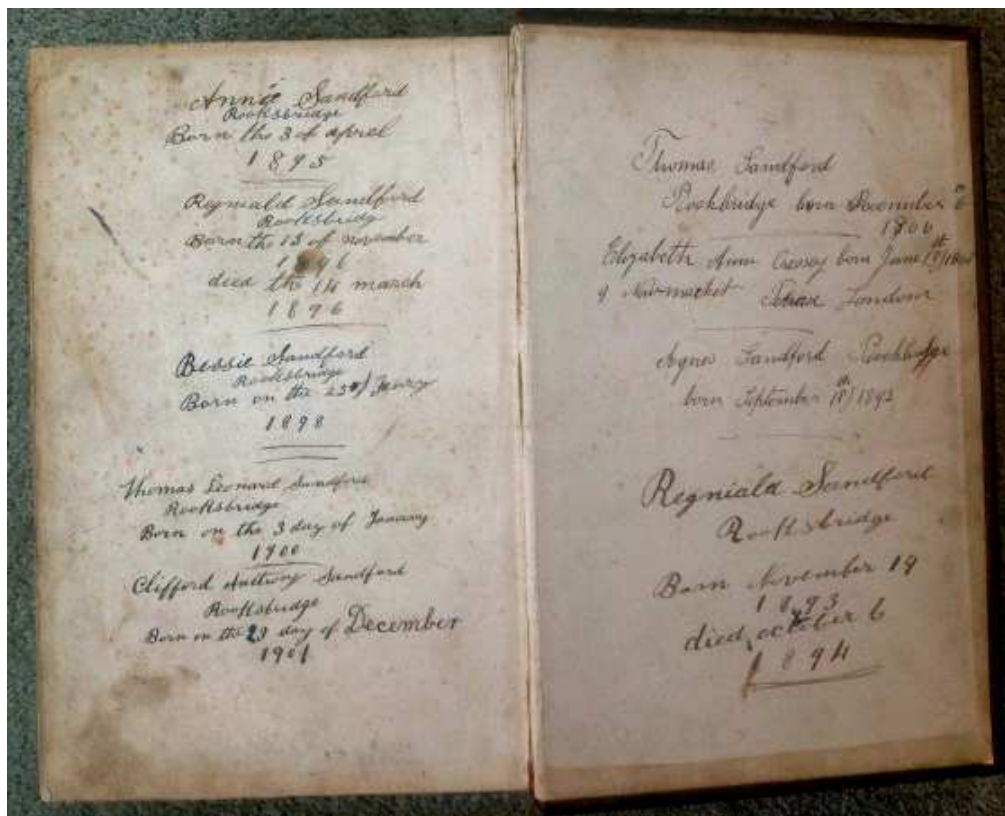
Herbert "George" born 23.12. 04, died May or June 1979 – he was always called George. He contracted polio as a child and had a withered leg. He walked with a crutch, but he was very agile and could run very fast, and could hurdle a five-bar gate. He never married. He was a saddler and harness-maker and ran the saddlers shop at the end of Gills Lane, Rooksbridge, and built 'The Acres' bungalow on his own land in Gills Lane.

Myra Dora May born 18.8.1909, died February 1911



Clara Maria, born 28.1.1911, died in her 90s. She married a Lock from Hewish and they had a daughter Silvie.

Pages from the SANDFORDS of 'Riverside' Rooksbridge. Family Bible.



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A James SANDFORD born in East Brent c: 1852 is believed to be a cousin of Thomas SANDFORD?

1881 he was serving in the Royal Marines based in East Stonehouse, Devon. He served in Egypt during the Battles of Suakin and Tofrek in 1885. In 1891 he was still serving and living in East Stonehouse Nr Devonport with his new wife Ann Cornish who came from Blackawton Nr Kingsbridge Devon.



After his discharge from the Marines They moved to Blackawton to live with Ann's widower Father Thomas Cornish. Where in 1911 he was working on a farm.

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It is unknown when Rowland Ham sold 'Riverside' ?
In the 1980's it was owned by Gavin McCardle who ran a Continental heavy haulage business from there. Travelling to Poland etc using his huge Kenilworth American truck.