

Preston Watson and family.

1842 - Preston Watson was born in Hougham, Lincolnshire and baptised there on October 27th that year. Hougham is about 9 miles southeast of Newark.

1851 - Still living in Hougham with his parents and siblings. His father was an Ag Lab.

1861 - Preston was working as a servant for a Surgeon in nearby Long Benington.

1871 - Preston was working as a Butler for a landowner and magistrate in Chewton near New Milton, Hampshire.

1876 - Preston married Elizabeth Jenkins at Christ Church, Rotherhithe, Southwark on April 27th. Preston listed as a Licensed Victualler. Elizabeth was born in Cripplegate, Middlesex in about 1840 and baptised at St Giles, Cripplegate on 28th January 1840. St Giles is one of the few remaining medieval churches in London.

1881 - Preston, Elizabeth and daughter Bessie Amy are living in West Street, Havant (recorded as West End) probably at The Prince of Wales. Preston's occupation, Licensed Victualler. Bessie was born in Cowes, IoW in 1878.

1891 - The three of them were living at 42 North St, Havant along with one servant. Preston's occupation, Wine Merchant.

1901 - Living at 12 North St, Havant along with Bertha Kemp, a niece and William J Shoesmith, Bessie's future husband, whose occupation was Wine Merchant's Clerk.

1903 - Marriage of Bessie Watson and William James Shoesmith in Havant.

1904 - Death of Elizabeth Watson in Havant, 20th December. Buried 26th December in grave 227 in the St Faith's section.

1907 - Marriage of Preston Watson and Annie Taylor in Havant. Annie was born in Hackney in about 1842. See her death in 1923 for an explanation of who she was but how they came to meet is a mystery.

1911 - Preston and Annie are living at 12 North St, Havant with one servant. Preston's occupation, Wine Merchant.

1911 - Bessie and William plus son John, aged 4 and daughter Margaret, aged 3 and also John's sister Catherine, aged 36, are living at Southover, Langstone Rd, Havant. John's occupation Manager to Wine Merchant.

1916 - Death of Bessie in Havant on December 31st. Buried in the Eastern Rd cemetery on 4th January 1917 in plot 1209. Southover listed as her home address.

1919 - Marriage of William Shoesmith and Alice May Page in April registered in Medway, Kent. Alice was born in Burwash, Sussex on February 7th 1894. Limited information about her prior to the marriage but she is called May in a letter (see Preston Watson's Gallery on Ancestry) which also mentioned that she was working as a barmaid when William met her.

1921 - Living at 12 North St were: Preston Watson, Wine & Spirit Merchant, Manufacturer of Aerated Waters; his wife Annie; William Shoesmith, Manager working for Preston; his second wife Annie May; William's children from his marriage to Bessie Watson, John and Elizabeth; his son with Alice, Norman, born 11th June 1920. Also listed as a Visitor is William's sister, Catherine, a Dressmaker and Daisy Webber, General Servant, originally from Bath.

1923 - Death of Preston Watson in Havant, 21st March. Burial 26th March in the same tomb as his first wife Elizabeth, which is located in the northwest corner of the St Faith's section. He left £9426 6s 9d.

1923 - Death of Annie Taylor in Havant, 25th October. There is no indication of where she is buried but her probate record naming Lucy Annie Onyon enabled me to establish that

Annie's maiden name was Onyon. In 1888 she married George William Taylor in Lewisham. He was buried on the 28th August 1909 and in 1901 Annie is listed a widow named Taylor living in Deptford with her brother William, his wife and some of his children, including Lucy.

1925 - Birth of Betty Shoesmith, daughter of William and Alice, in Havant, 25th February.

1939 - William & Annie are living at Elmina, St George's Avenue, Warblington. William a Wine and Spirit Merchant, Annie a WVS Voluntary Ambulance Driver. Living with them are Norman an Apprentice Operating Engineer, Royal Navy and Betty, still at school.

1942 - Death of William Shoesmith, 12th of January. He was killed by a Southdown bus on Langstone Rd, seemingly walking home after work but heading to his and Bessie's old house not to Warblington. An oddity was that the accident happened an hour and a half after he left the shop at 9.15pm. His body was cremated in Southampton and after a funeral service at Warblington, his ashes were scattered in the churchyard.

1976 - Death of May Alice Shoesmith (christian names transposed) of Kilbirnie, 28 Bedhampton Hill, Bedhampton, Havant, 15th October. No funeral records.

The grandchildren.

John Preston Shoesmith.

1930 – Married Evelyn A Marshall in Havant. Evelyn was born in Havant, 21st, September, 1907 and in 1921 was living in South St. Her father was a Watercress Grower.

1939 - John and Evelyn were living at 12 North St, Havant with 3 of their eventually 4 children. John a Wine & Spirit Merchant and an Auxiliary Fireman.

1952 - Evelyn died at Fitzroy House, Fitzroy Square, London W1 on January 8th. Home address still 12 North St, Havant. It appears that Fitzroy House was a small hospital owned by the Nuffield Nursing Homes Trust when it closed in 1966.

1953 - JP married Mary L Freeston in Havant. Mary was born in Havant in 1929. They had a son Richard C who was born in Havant in 1955.

1993 - Death of John Preston Shoesmith in Bishop's Waltham, 13th May.

Elizabeth Margaret (Peggy) Shoesmith. The christian names get reversed as time goes on.

1927 – Married Frederick Charles Humphrey Tamsett. Registered in West Ashford, Kent. Frederick was born in Pluckley, Kent, 7th March 1904. In 1921 he was in Malta serving as a "Boy 1st Class" on a Royal Navy light cruiser.

1939 - Margaret and Frederick were living in Hollingbourn, nr Maidstone, Kent with 6 children. Frederick was a Farm General Labourer.

1944 - Death of Frederick C H Tamsett. Registered in Bodmin, January 1944. Maybe they had been evacuated to Devon.

1945 - Birth of Michael Tamsett, registered in Bodmin, January 1945. The date doesn't make entire sense but maybe there was a long delay in registering the birth. The fact that he married back in Kent in 1967 gives some credence to him being their child as does a comment in a family letter.

1982 - Death of Margaret Elizabeth Tamsett of 46 Foxglove Green, Willesborough, Ashford, Kent on September 17th.

Norman Shoesmith.

1942 - Norman died at sea aboard HMS Avenger, 15th November. His name is on the Portsmouth War Memorial.

"HMS Avenger was a [Royal Navy escort aircraft carrier](#) during the Second World War. In 1939 she was laid down as the [merchant ship *Rio-Hudson*](#) at the [Sun Shipbuilding & Drydock Company](#) yard in [Chester, Pennsylvania](#). Launched on 27 November 1940, she was converted to an escort carrier and transferred under the [lend lease](#) agreement to the Royal Navy. She was commissioned on 2 March 1942.

Avenger's capacity allowed for a maximum of 15 aircraft. In September 1942, she took part in what was the largest and most successful [Russian convoy](#) to date. Upon her return home, after observing a number of design faults, *Avenger's* captain drew up recommendations for future escort carrier design. In November 1942 she took part in [Operation Torch](#), the Allied invasion of North Africa, where she suffered engine problems. While leaving North Africa to start the journey home *Avenger* was sunk by the [German submarine U-155](#) on 15 November 1942 at 3:20am GMT, 9 hours after leaving Gibraltar for Britain, with a heavy loss of life among her crew." Source Wikipedia.

Betty Shoesmith.

1979 - A telephone directory entry shows her living at 28 Bedhampton Hill, the address where her mother had died in 1976.

1996 - Betty died on August 1st, aged 71. Her last residence was in PO9 meaning that she may still have been living 28 Bedhampton Hill. She never married.

PS The family sold the business circa 1955. The business was subsequently wound up on January 23rd 1964. The buildings were later demolished to make way for Waitrose which opened in November 1979.

Further information can be found on my Ancestry Tree "The Watsons and Shoesmiths of Havant". Author Christopher Evans.