

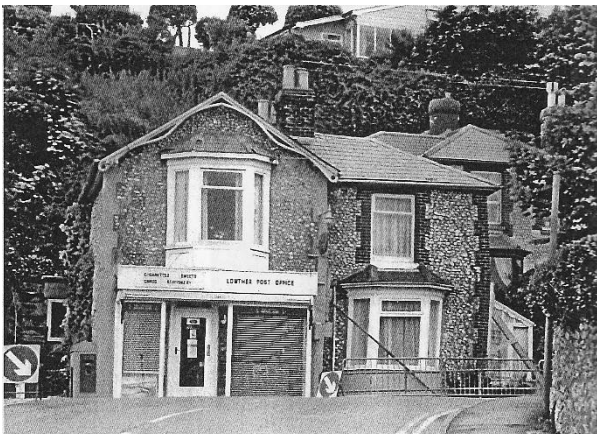


Annie Bucket's



Older residents will recognise this name and know exactly the part of Ventnor to which it refers. The picture provides another clue, but you need to have lived in Ventnor before the late-1980s for it to be of any help. These buildings, part of Milford Cottages on Newport Road, were demolished by that time, the result of land movement that continues to this day, for here we are a little above the junction of Gills Cliff Road and Ocean View Road on what geologists know as a graben, a continuing downward displacement of a block of land.

The name Annie Bucket comes from the one-time resident of No. 6 Milford Cottages. Her father, George Bucket, was a local stonemason, aged 45 at the time of the 1891 Census, with a wife Maria, 16-year-old son Ernest and daughter Annie who was 14. Annie never married and became a familiar figure in the town and in Upper Ventnor. She was a laundress for much of her life and died in 1955, aged 78. Her life-time residency of the house (the one to the right) was how this particular location came always to be known by locals as 'Annie Bucket's'. The date of the picture is about 1918 and we know this because the four figures on the left have been identified as David and Mary Dolman, with their children, Elsie and William. They stand at the gate of 5 Milford Cottages where they were then living. Unfortunately, we have no identifications for the other figures to the right.



The lower picture shows the nearby Lowther Post Office that was westward down the road (actually 1 and 2 Milford Cottages), but the date is now the 1980s and the stability of the structure is already under threat and has had to be supported on its eastern wall, another casualty of land movement. At one time, there were buildings on both sides of this first stretch of Newport Road, but nearly all are now gone.

Michael Freeman, from files in Ventnor Heritage Centre, especially those of the late Fay Brown who, for many years, lived only a few hundred yards away, higher up this road. Mary Thomas identified the Dolman family, for Elsie was her mother, once manageress of

Timothy White's in Ventnor and, later, of Ventnor Food Office during the last war. [*This is an updated version of the article published in the South Wight Chronicle on 10 December 2020*]