



Tiger Tea – part two



This week we continue the story of the Tiger Tea Stores run by Joseph Sanders. The picture shows the two shop units he occupied at 15 and 17 Pier Street, with the date probably in the early 1900s. His grocery business was by then being conducted at no.17, while no.15 formed the Alexandra Tea Rooms, later to become the Alexandra Café.

Joseph Sanders was a native of Derby, born in 1860. In 1886, his doctors there had given him just five years to live and so he came south to Ventnor for his health. He died on the Island in December 1952, aged 93, the *Isle of Wight Mercury* recording in its obituary how this proved a 'wonderful testimony to the health-giving qualities of Ventnor's climate'. He was in business in Pier Street for 33 years, retiring in 1919. By then, he owned 15 and 17 Pier Street, buying no.17 first, in 1897, for £810. Over the years, he accumulated considerable wealth and in 1922 became owner (with W. Beasley) of the whole of Devonshire Terrace on the eastern cliffs. He was one of the oldest members of the High Street Methodist church, acting as its treasurer for a period. He twice served on the Town Council, described as a quiet and useful contributor. Sanders lost his first wife, Eleanor, in 1928, after more than 40 years of marriage. He married his second wife, Elsie May Sanders, in 1929 and she survived him till 1959.

Locally, her husband was often known as 'Tiger' Sanders, reflecting the popularity of his skill as a tea taster and blender, as described in part one.

Ventnor & District Local History Society: Michael Freeman, from files in Ventnor Heritage Centre



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