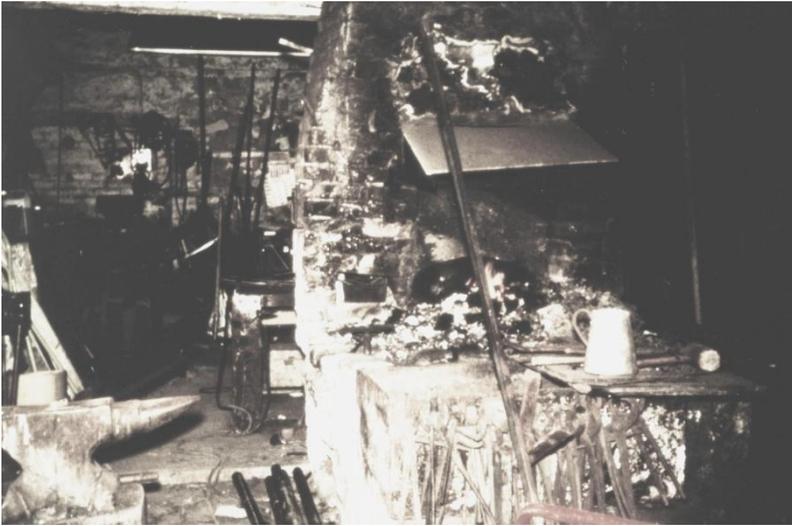


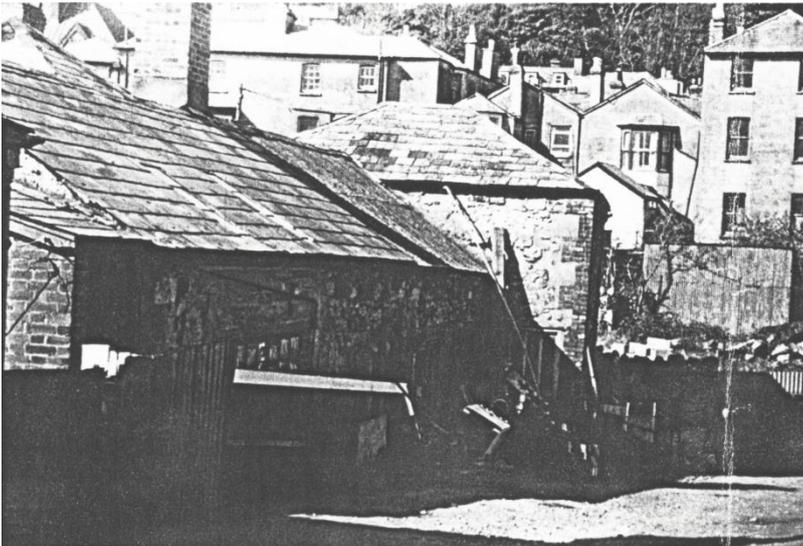


## Obie Dyer's blacksmith's shop, Pound Lane, Ventnor



Austin (Obie) Dyer was born in late 1890, the third son of the Ventnor blacksmith, James Dyer, who after a long residence in the town, retired to Dorset just before the Great War. Obie took over the successful business and soon became renowned all over the Island as a craftsman in iron and steel. Aided later by his employee, Mr. E.W.Bannister, he developed a speciality in making, by hand, elegant wrought iron gates. Obie had earlier served as a farrier-sergeant with the Royal Artillery in India during the 1914-18 War. Too old to serve in the 1939-

45 War other than in the Home Guard, he quickly found his skills in great demand after it ended as the Island started to rebuild its piers, including that at Ventnor. The picture of the blackened forge interior clearly shows the fire and its chimney, with the anvil on the far left.



The lower image shows the exterior of the forge, taken some time after Obie Dyer's sad death in 1961, at the Royal National Hospital, Steephill, aged 70. Tributes in the press made it plain that he was much more than a blacksmith. Aside from his wife Minnie Hilda Dyer and their married son and married daughter, Obie was an all-round sportsman, who played for Ventnor Football Club and for Ventnor Cricket Club, as well as being an expert at billiards and snooker. He was cricket captain for many years and earned fame for a stroke that involved lifting his left leg high and

driving the ball right out of the ground, to the consternation of the fielding side.

*Ventnor & District Local History Society: Michael Freeman, from files in Ventnor Heritage Centre, including those of the late Fay Brown.*



Ventnor & District Local History Society is a registered charity, working to preserve and record the history of our area and make it available to the public in the Ventnor Heritage Centre. The Society and Heritage Centre are run and managed by volunteers.

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