

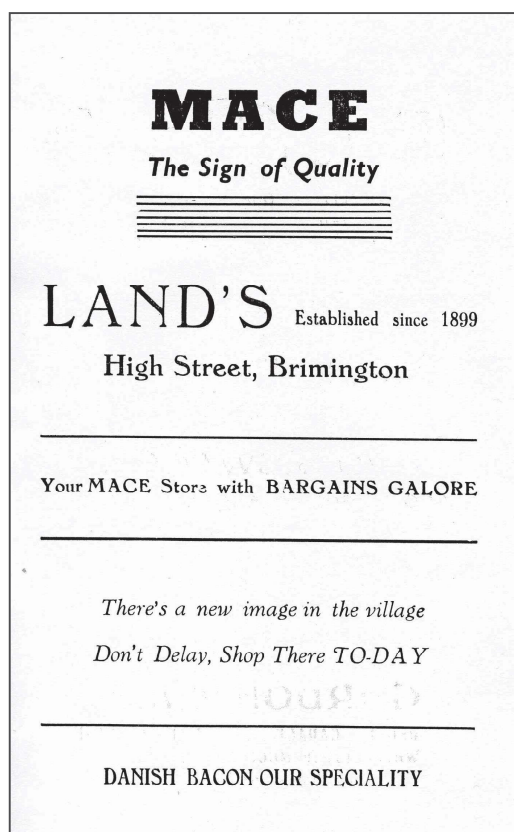
RECOLLECTIONS OF LAND'S SHOP, 26 HIGH STREET, BRIMINGTON

Maggie Sanderson

Introduction

In *Miscellany* 7, the death of my father, Gordon Land on 6 December 2014 was mentioned.¹ An article appeared in the parish church magazine *Celebrate and Share* to mark his death. I have, at the suggestion of the editor, revisited the original article, which I wrote, and added some additional information and illustrations. I hope that it is a fitting tribute to the work that my father and mother did serving Brimington people for something like 40 years and for a business which had first been established in the village in 1899 at 26 High Street, being sold out of the family in 1984.

Gordon Land and the family business



A Land's advertisement from the 2nd Annual Brimington gala and fete programme, held on Eastwood Park on 17 June 1967. The first directory entry for the business found is in Kelly's Directory of Derbyshire for 1904. Mace was a national brand used by Lands. It survives today with over 764 stores on a franchise basis – the Mace brand currently being owned by Costcutter Supermarkets Group. (Collection Philip Cousins).

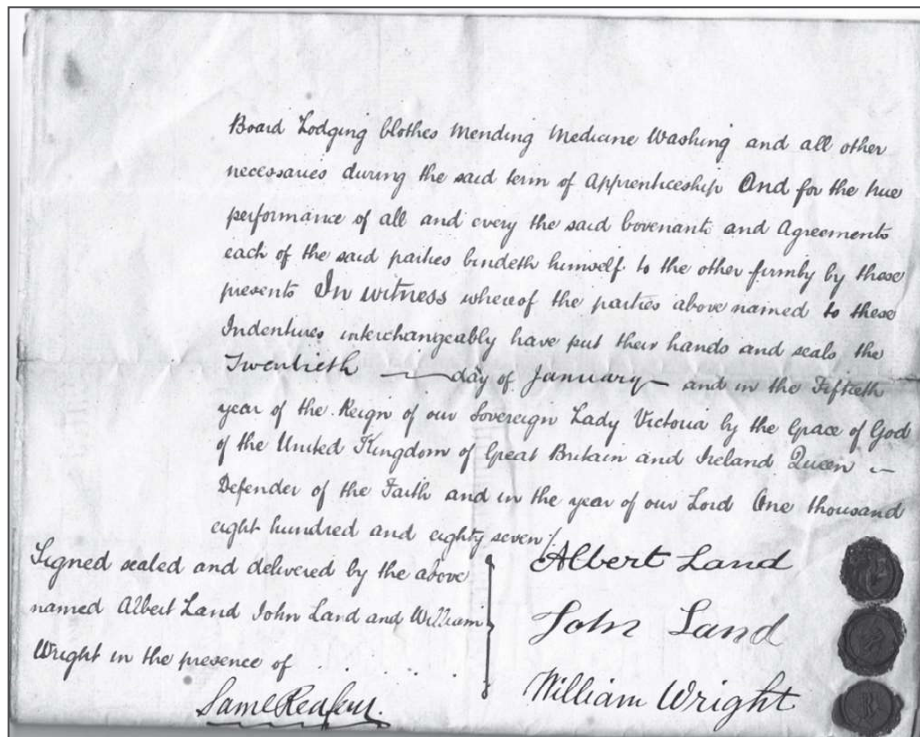
There was a time in Brimington when most people would know Gordon Land (and his father and grandfather before him). The family grocery business was his life for around 40 years. Early mornings spent boiling the hams (a speciality, as their invoices said), slicing the bacon and welcoming early morning customers. Time for a chat, maybe, with his good friend Horace Sanderson, the local milkman.

Another shopkeeper, Ken Godfrey would walk up the High Street to call in and say good morning. Frank Stephenson, an old family friend, had the gents' hairdressers nearby. Bill Humphries, was the greengrocer next door. It would then be time to collect the bread from Bernard Barnett's bakery on Manor Road. Sausages and pork pies would be collected from Jean and Wilf Haag, pork butchers on Whittington Moor.

My great grandfather, Albert Land and his wife's brother-in-law, Edwin Wright both worked at what was the Co-Op shop in High Street. Albert opened the 26 High Street shop in 1899 and then Edwin probably moved to Mosborough, where the Wright family had a grocery business for many years.

I am fortunate to have the original Indenture dated 20 January 1887, made between Albert Land, his father John Land and Edwin's father, William Wright. It illustrates how Albert started as an apprentice grocer earning five shillings and sixpence per week, and also 'sufficient meat, drink, board, lodging, clothes, mending, medicine, washing and all other necessities ...'

¹ *Brimington and Tupton Miscellany* 7 (2015), pp. 14-15. He was born on the 23 March 1924.



Final page from the apprentice's indenture of 1887 of my great grandfather Albert Land, who ultimately went on to found the High Street business in 1899. (Author's collection)

My grandfather, John William Land took over the business on his father, Albert's, death in 1936 until his retirement in 1962. He married twice – his first wife died in 1954; he remarried in 1958, to Dora. On J.W.'s retirement in 1962 my dad, Gordon took over. Many people will also remember 'aunty Elsie', John's sister, working in the shop.

As well as a grocery business, Lands were also corn merchants delivering and selling the corn locally. Corn would be collected from local farms before being sold on. The wonderful photograph of my granddad's first lorry, appearing in this article, was, I believe, taken around 1920.

Sadly, this line of work was not for me, so Land's shop would come to an end after 85 years – the business being sold to the present owners, the Birdi family, in 1984.

During the 1960s, Gordon took part in window dressing competitions and he won a few too. It was about this time, the shop became 'self service' and part of the Mace organisation. I would have the task of delivering 'Mace' special offer leaflets around the village with my good friend, Janet. Mum, always by dad's side, would be collecting orders from customers, then delivering a few days later, as well as working on the new 'check out'. Enid Murkin, Val Drury and Margaret Allsop would be serving behind the counter. And at the end of a busy day, they would enjoy a drink with customers and friends in Brimington Club.

In the early 1970s, when I married and moved to Lincolnshire, Dad would put the trailer on the back of the car and drive to Boston to load up with cauliflowers, cabbages etc., always wanting to please his loyal customers.

On a poignant note, at the time of the Markham pit disaster, the phone at the shop provided an important contact point for families and during the miners' strike everything was done to keep up the community spirit in the village.

Gordon and Mona took part in shows performed by Robinson and Sons Operatic Society, such as Carousel, South Pacific, Oklahoma and Half a Sixpence. Saturday afternoons would see them heading

off into the Peak District in their caravan and, once a year, a week in Cornwall. Half day closing on Wednesday would be spent in Clumber Park. They enjoyed Saturday night dances at the A.G.D. in Chesterfield and also Ringwood Hall.

It was around the time the business was sold to the Birdi family that Mona and Gordon became active members of the church family at St Michaels, particularly enjoying the coffee mornings on a Tuesday and Saturday, happily reminiscing with friends about the good old days.

Gordon was a member of Staveley Fellowship for many years and also enjoyed singing with their choir. He was also a very proud member of the Burma Star organisation, having served there as an Armourer with the R.A.F. during the Second World War.

My parents were fortunate to have a long and happy retirement. For 26 years, they enjoyed the freedom of their caravan, spending time in Scotland, Cornwall, Norfolk and, in particular, most summers in Essex fruit picking for Wilkins and Sons, Tiptree.

In 2010 an important decision was made to move and live near their family in Hereford. What perfect timing to be able to share precious time with us, in particular their grandchildren and great grandchildren, knowing the time had come when extra care would be needed for both of them. Hereford always had a special place in Gordon's heart too. He was stationed at R.A.F. Credenhill as a young airman, which is now the home of the S.A.S. Their new life together, in their lovely flat, was happy and content.

In December, 2014 at 90 years of age, still smiling, still singing and still the same cheeky sense of humour, Gordon passed away with his loving family at his side. In the many cards and letters of condolence we received, one phrase stood out – 'what a lovely man' - they were right, he was. I wrote a special tribute to dad which, to me, encapsulates the person he was.

My dad brought laughter, magic and sparkle to my life. He showed me how to paint and draw, share his love of music and oh, how we could waltz! He made me believe in fairies, pixies and Santa Claus and taught me the value of true friendship and that a close, loving family is not measured in miles and wealth is nothing to do with money. Caring and sharing his life over the last four years has been an absolute joy.

Before Mum and I left the Hereford County Hospital (where Dad died), we visited the chapel there and these are the words my Mum wanted writing in the book; 'Praise for the life he has had and the pleasure he has given other people.'

I am sure you would like to know mum is being well cared for at Kington Court Community Care Centre, near Hereford. She keeps in regular telephone contact with friends and family in Brimington and loves to hear all the news. Local history has always been an interest to her and I know she is thrilled to be able to share these memories with you.



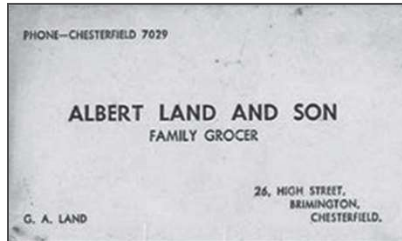
*Mona and Gordon Land, pictured in 2010.
(The author)*



Two 1920s photographs of a Ford model T lorry, with bodywork built for A. Land and Son by joinery business H. Hazard. The left photograph is taken outside Hazard's premises at the High Street end of Heywood Street in Brimington; that on the right to the side of 26 High Street. (Author's collection)



Enid Murkin working behind the shop counter and refrigerated display cabinet, possibly sometime in the late 1960s / early 1970s, certainly after currency decimalisation. Note the 'Lands – Established 1899...' on the cabinet. (Author's collection)



Left; founder of the business, Albert Land, takes a stroll with his daughter-in-law Zoe. Above, top; Mona Land, as many will remember her, dressed in her overall. Above; Gordon Land's business card. (All author's collection)

26 High Street,
Brimington. *Sept 19*

M. *19*

ALBERT LAND & SON
WHOLESALE AND RETAIL
Family Grocers and Provision Merchants
TELEPHONE: CHESTERFIELD 7029 PROPRIETORS-J. W. & A. L. LAND

✓ 1/2 Butts	1	11
✓ 1/2 Sun Lard	1	11
✓ 1 1/4 Kaff. May	2	5
— Cats 1/4 1	1	91
Chon. Pail		
✓ 7 Brown 1/4	2	0
✓ 1 1/4 Soap	1	3
✓ Peas 1/2	1	2
✓ 2 1/4 Sugar	2	2
✓ 1 1/4 Apricot	2	1
✓ 3 1/4 Bn Do	1	10
✓ 2 1/2 P. milk	1	4
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Left; A 1950s bill from Albert Land & Son, printed by local printer George Allen. Above; Granddad (John), his wife Zoe and Dad's sister, Hazel outside the shop at 26 High Street, taken in August 1944. (Both author's collection)