

# ROUNABOUT RINGWOOD & SURROUNDING VILLAGES

## NOW and THEN

**W. A. Ghrimes, 3-5 High Street, Ringwood.**

Long before the furniture shop in the Furlong Centre was built, W.A.Ghrimes Ltd was once the place where Ringwood folk went to furnish their homes.

The first record of the Ghrimes family in Ringwood is the 1841 census which shows William Thomas Ghrimes, an upholsterer's assistant aged about 25, living with his widowed mother. He was born in Lymington, the son of an exciseman, and probably came to Ringwood as an apprentice. By 1855 he was married with a young family and had established his own upholstery business on the south side of the High Street, in the tall three storey house shown on the right of the c1900 photograph.

The lower buildings shown on the left of the old photograph were two separate little shops. Early in the 20th century the shop on the extreme left was demolished and a new three storey shop built in its place, shown in the 1960 photograph as Goddens family butcher.

After William Thomas Ghrimes' death in 1875 his widow Fanny continued the cabinet-making and upholstery business until her son William Alexander took over. The business prospered and eventually expanded into the remaining little shop next door. For the first



c1900

Loose covers, carpets and curtains were made to order.

As Mr Trimmer grew older, more responsibility was taken on by his company director Brian Peck and Brian's wife Joan, who acted as company secretary for more than 25 years. Together the couple were very well known in the town as they took an active interest in the community.

In 1985 the business finally closed on Brian Peck's retirement due to ill health and concern about the increasing competition from the new furniture superstores.

Soon afterwards the entire shop was demolished and replaced by a new development called Friday's Court. Until recently the two new shops facing the High Street were Fields jewellers and Forest sportswear but these have now closed. Balloonarray has taken the left hand shop and the other is vacant at the time of writing. The tall shop on the far left is now RSPCA Ashley Heath Animal Centre charity shop.



1960's

half of the 20th century it was still owned by the Ghrimes family, but in 1946 the company was sold to Frank Trimmer, though the name W.A.Ghrimes Ltd was retained. By this time the business covered every kind of furnishing for the home, as well as furniture removals and storage, as shown in the 1960s photograph taken by Ted Baker above.



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