

ROUNABOUT RINGWOOD & SURROUNDING VILLAGES

NOW and THEN

13-15 West Street, Ringwood.

13-15 West Street is currently an unoccupied office next door to Ringwood Social Club. However for many years during the 20th century it was a bakery owned by the Foot family.

with the baking and deliveries. William was always forward-looking. After WW1 ended he bought a model T Ford delivery van, one of the first motorised vans in Ringwood, driven by Bill.



c1925

The photograph of the novelty ox-wagon advertising Atora suet outside his shop c1925 demonstrates William's keen talent for product promotion.

The business went well until 1929 when Bessie, having borne 14 children, died. William was devastated and so the next generation had to take over. Bill and his sister Lillian kept the bakery going through the difficult days of WWII. Only bread, being an essential food item, was made; fancy cakes were

William Foot from Dorset first came to Ringwood to work for baker Andrew Etheridge at Friday's Cross. William was a very energetic, enterprising man. In 1897, aged only 22, he acquired his West Street property where he set up business as a bakery, grocery and general store, even selling medicines. On marrying his wife Bessie in 1899 the front room was made

where she sold and cakes. William's favourite hobby was cider-making using fifteen varieties of apples grown in the rear orchard.



All Foot's bread was baked in the brick bake-house erected at the rear of the premises. The bread was hand moulded requiring much hard physical work. As well as his usual customers William supplied the Church with Brown's Charity bread for the poor and Harvest Festival loaves shaped like sheaves. As the business grew William employed his eldest son Bill and several local men to help

stopped.

After the war things became easier. Bill and his brothers Gerald and Raymond acquired a dough mixer, a cake mixer, a bacon slicer and a chest freezer for Birds Eye frozen foods! However things were changing rapidly as supermarkets began to open in Ringwood and the Foot family struggled to compete. The shop finally closed about 1966.

This account of Foot's bakery is taken from a full history of the family written by Will John Foot, son of Bill and eldest grandson of William Foot. A copy is available in Ringwood Meeting House.



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